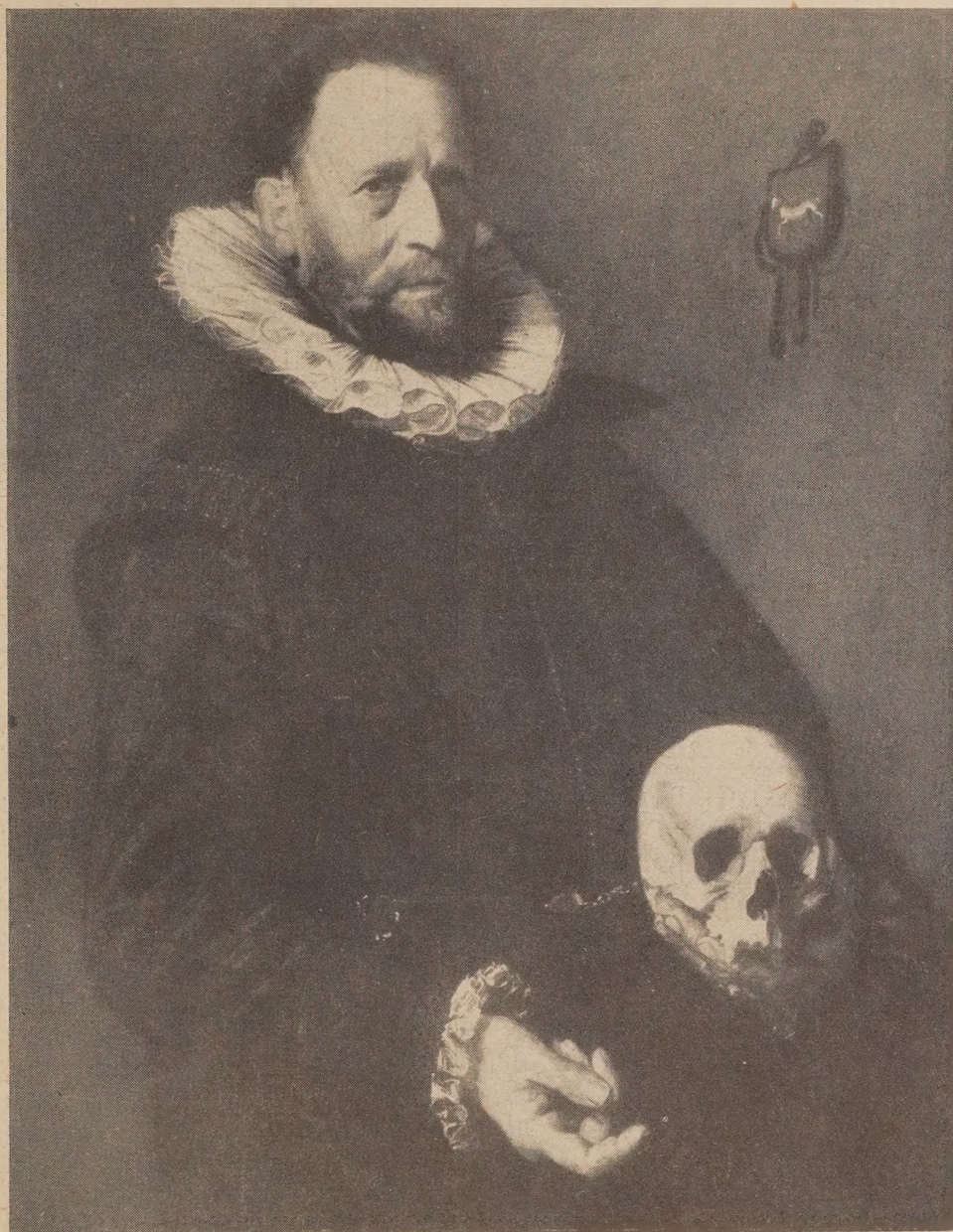


The Listener

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'Portrait of a Man Holding a Skull', by Franz Hals: in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham (see p. 110)

In this number:

The Intellectual and Politics (Angus Maude, M.P.)

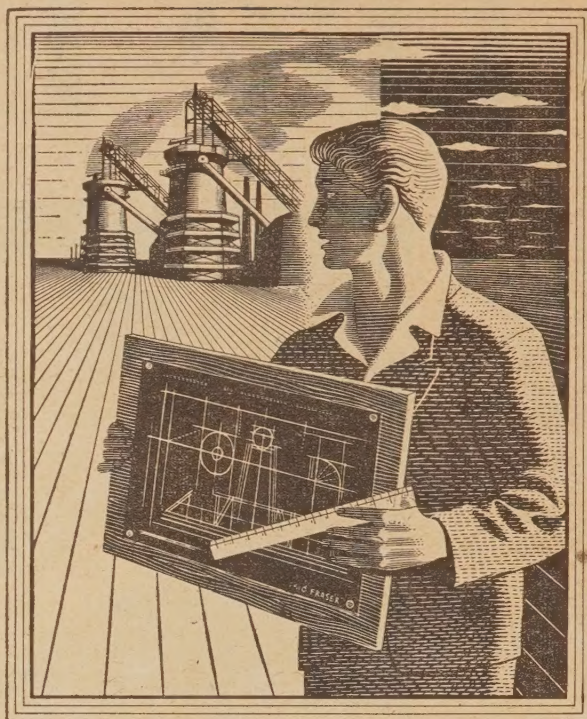
A Struggle between Two Religions (Otto Dibelius)

Old Omnibuses (Sir Compton Mackenzie)

WEAR AND TEAR



A FIRM specialising in precast concrete work were using inflated canvas-covered rubber tubes — known as pneumatic cores — to form holes in cast concrete slabs, but the wear and tear on the canvas was so severe that a more durable covering had to be found. They required a fabric that would not stretch when the cores were inflated, and which would not be affected by chemical action in the wet concrete mix. In addition the material had to be exceptionally resistant to the abrasion that occurred when the cores were deflated and withdrawn from the cast slab. The firm took the problem to I.C.I. Leathercloth Division whose technical service department suggested the use of 'Vynide' — a tough pliable upholstery material consisting of a textile fabric coated with a plastic — polyvinyl chloride. To do the job the division produced a reinforced type of 'Vynide' with a specially smooth surface. This fulfilled all requirements and increased the life of the cores from three months to nine months.



There's a future in STEEL

WHEN FIRMS in the steel industry made their post-war development plans in 1946 they did not think wholly in terms of new steel works and blast furnaces. They co-operated in setting up organisations throughout the country to improve vocational training. Everyone in steel, from the most recent apprentice to the most seasoned foreman, has been encouraged to make the most of his career in this expanding industry.

By making films, filmstrips and pamphlets and by arranging lectures and visits, the companies have co-operated in helping young people at schools and in works to understand the techniques of iron and steel making, and the industry's part in producing the nation's wealth. An exchange scheme has been arranged to enable trainees to study European steel works.

Britain's future depends on the young men entering industry today.

'What about my future P'
says
JACK SCRAP

The steel industry still needs all the scrap which engineering firms and other steel-users can send back. Search out every ton of scrap on your premises. Your local scrap merchant will help with dismantling and collection.

● Issued by the BRITISH IRON AND STEEL FEDERATION
Steel House, Tothill Street, London, S.W.1

The Listener

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President Truman's Farewell

By CHARLES COLLINGWOOD

IN these days, while the Administration of the United States is preparing to change, President-elect Eisenhower is making his Government, and President Truman is making his case. Mr. Truman has a lively, if not precise, sense of history, and in this transitional period, when partisan passion has somewhat cooled, he is intent upon spreading forth the record of what he is convinced are the solid accomplishments of his administration. He is doing this in a number of ways. For instance, in these last few weeks, he has offered himself for a series of personal interviews with some of the correspondents who have reported his activities as President. These interviews have provided many human and fascinating insights into Mr. Truman's convictions and his processes of thought. In one of the most recent, he delivered himself of some observations on the example of what he called 'General MacArthur's insubordination as a factor lowering morale in Korea'. This drew a great rumble of rebuttal from the General, proving that that particular volcano is far from extinct.

But President Truman's solidest claims to the attention of history are being put forward in a series of more formal documents which is not yet completed. The first two of these were his State of the Union message, and his Budget; to be followed by an economic review, and, later, by a farewell address. In a sense, they are all farewell messages, for his responsibility is soon to end, and all of them are devoted, in one way or another, to a defence of his stewardship and an outline of the broad lines of policy which he hopes the new regime will not annul. What caught most people's attention in the State of the Union message was Mr. Truman's dilation on the terrible implications which flow from the recent testing of the hydrogen bomb. This is a subject which had only been mentioned in whispers, before the President brought it so dramatically into the open with his admonition to Prime Minister Stalin. His discussion of it in his State of the Union message will serve to ensure the dating of the hydrogen era from his Administration.

But he dwelt much longer on other accomplishments of his time in office. His main theme was the way in which the United States had used the pre-eminent position of power, in his words, to help other nations and to strengthen the free world. At the very least, he said, a total war has been averted each day up to this hour. And at the most we may already have succeeded in establishing conditions which can keep that kind of war from happening for as far ahead as man can see. To buttress that, he cited some of the programmes and decisions in which he takes special pride, beginning with the Greek-Turkish aid programme, and carrying through to the series of assistance projects, beginning with the Marshall Plan and culminating in the current Mutual Security Programme and Point Four. Although many agreed with Senator Taft that there was much in the President's account of recent history that was left out in order to present the most favourable picture possible, none the less, the President's State of the Union message was received with more respect and more approval than has been the custom to accord to his documents.

Now that the many controversies attending his Administration have died down, for the moment at least, the American people seem willing to accept the view that their nation has not comported itself badly in the period now coming to a close. There was some real eloquence in the President's State of the Union message; there could be none in the Budget. For the Budget is a collection of figures rather than words. Nevertheless, this last Truman Budget does much to illumine the argument that he is making. It is in effect a challenge to the new Administration. To understand this, one must understand the circumstances in which it was presented to the new Congress. In the first place, it is a real anomaly of the American political system, whereby the defeated Administration presents its estimates of future expenditures to its victorious rivals, who presumably won because they had their own ideas on what should and should not be done. In the second place, the exuberant Republicans, or an influential part of them, have been trumpeting

from the house-tops their intention of cutting Federal expenditures to the bone, and of hacking any Truman Budget to pieces. General Eisenhower himself is on record as agreeing with Senator Taft that government expenses should be limited to \$70,000,000,000 a year. Mr. Truman's recommendations run to \$78,000,000,000, which is a very great deal of money in any language or any political lexicon.

As the Budget was being prepared within the Truman Administration, there was a powerful group who counselled 'Let us fix the Republicans by giving them a Budget so low and so parsimonious that they will not only be unable to cut it, but will be forced by the necessities of the situation to increase it'. Thus, it was argued, we will make them eat their words about slashing government expenses, and we Democrats will emerge as the true apostles of economy, not they. But President Truman resisted this ingenious argument. 'I do not do business that way', he told reporters firmly. And, instead, he insisted on a Budget which, while not padded, contained adequate sums to do all the things the President felt needed doing.

Democrats' Views on Foreign Aid

In this total, one item sticks out like a sore thumb. It is the item for foreign aid, for military, economic, and technical assistance to America's friends and allies. It runs to \$7,900,000,000, or roughly ten per cent. of the total. The axe-wielders in Congress are already sharpening their instruments for it. The President and Mutual Security Director Averill Harriman knew exactly what they were doing when they included so large an item for military and economic assistance. They knew that foreign aid is unpopular in Congress, that it is the easiest thing in the Budget to cut, because there are no votes in France or Italy or India or anywhere else that the money goes. They had to override many arguments designed to keep the figure to a minimum, to pare it down, but they decided that here is where the outgoing Democratic Administration would make its stand. The American Mutual Security Programme is the crux of America's new relationship to the world around it. It symbolises the whole attitude towards building strength in the free world which the Truman Administration has tried to follow. The President and Mr. Harriman agreed that their recommendations would be to spend as much as they thought would be needed to maintain the momentum of Mutual Security—no more, but certainly no less. If the Republicans want to emasculate the programme, then, said they, they must answer before the bar of history. Although the Mutual Security Programme is the most outstanding example, in a sense the whole of Mr. Truman's Budget implies this challenging attitude. This, he is saying to the new Congress, is what I would do if I had the doing of it. We will see if the Republicans can do it better.

In his economic message, the President presents statistics to buttress his argument, to say that not only can the United States afford his programmes, but that in carrying them out the economy has actually grown stronger rather than weaker. Then, on January 15*, he goes before the country with a farewell address in which he will relate all these things, and set forth his view of what he has done that was well done, and the course he hopes will be followed.

While the President is thus putting his case before the people, the President-elect is finishing organising the team with which he will take up where Mr. Truman leaves off. He has by now picked out his entire cabinet, most of the junior cabinet, a good many ambassadors, and some of the heads of important government agencies. So far there has been only one important hold-over from the Truman Administration nominated to high office in the new one, and his appointment holds no political significance. The hold-over is General Walter Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's war-time Chief of Staff and great friend, who has been Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. General Smith, whom Eisenhower once described as the best Chief of Staff a commander ever had, goes to the State Department, to perform

that function for John Foster Dulles, whose Under-Secretary he will be. It is an obvious move to strengthen the prestige and effectiveness of the American Foreign Office, which has lately been under heavy political fire, to put it delicately.

Already, the Eisenhower headquarters on the sixth floor of New York's Commodore Hotel is reminiscent of nothing so much as the White House itself, the same reporters outside the door, the same air of great affairs and a business-like competence. In fact, an argument could be made that the sixth floor of the Commodore is, in effect, already the White House. This impression was heightened by last week's visit of Mr. Churchill, who spent considerably more time with the President-elect and his associates than he did with the President and his. The United States welcomed Mr. Churchill in the way the United States always does. Questions of whether or not this was the best possible time to arrive were suspended in his case.

Although each of the old friends emphasised that the talks were informal and in no wise official, American commentators and political writers attached considerable importance to them. They saw the Prime Minister arriving, not as an individual, but as an emissary, symbolically at least, of all Europe. And, in a curious way, these American commentators saw Mr. Churchill as the exponent of their own point of view. For expert opinion in the United States is pretty well agreed on the great issues of international relations, and that opinion in general follows the line, at least the broad line, which the out-going Administration took. In a real sense Mr. Churchill came to argue for the retention of that attitude. It would be a great pity, he said, to make any indefinite extension of the Korean war. The centre of gravity is not in the far east, but along the frontier of the Iron Curtain in western Europe. And this is part of the doctrine on which Mr. Truman and Mr. Acheson have based their foreign policy. The ambiguities of campaign oratory have not yet been clarified, and there are large elements of American opinion which are as concerned as Mr. Churchill that General Eisenhower and his associates see clearly the implications of another course. That was one of the reasons he was welcomed.

There were many who thought, as Mr. Churchill came, that in the present context the counsels of a Churchill would be more persuasive than those of a Truman or an Acheson. Foreign policy looms very large in the minds of the American people, and of their new leaders as the Eisenhower Administration prepares to take over. There is no clearer indication of the overriding importance of foreign relations than that Senator Taft, who has built his career on his mastery of domestic affairs, has asked to be given a seat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. And, what is more, Americans appear to want some continuity in the conduct of their foreign relations. In a real sense, the visit of Mr. Churchill provided that.—*Home Service*

The B.B.C. Quarterly

THE WINTER NUMBER of *The B.B.C. Quarterly* (Vol. VII, No. 4, price 2s. 6d.) will be published next Monday. It contains the following articles: 'Broadcasting as the Author's Friend', by Sir Compton Mackenzie; 'Education and Radio Drama', by Val Gielgud; 'Music and the Spoken Word', by Hubert Foss; 'Inter-Commonwealth School Broadcasting: An Experiment', by R. S. Lambert and R. Bronner; 'Television Transcriptions: The Economic Possibilities', by Hugh Carleton Greene; 'The Philosophy of Broadcasting', by Renford Bambrough; and 'The Club d'Essai', by Jean Tardieu who is its Artistic Director. In addition there are two elaborately illustrated technical articles: 'The B.B.C. Television Transmitting Stations', by P. A. T. Bevan, and 'Membrane Sound Absorbers and their Application to Broadcasting Studios', by C. L. S. Gilford. The *Quarterly* may be obtained from the B.B.C. Publications Department, 35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1, or from the usual newsgagents.

* Mr. Collingwood's talk was broadcast on January 12

Coral Island Republic

RICHARD WILLIAMS, B.B.C. correspondent, on the Maldiv Islands

ON January 1 the Maldiv Islands became a republic, and the Sultanate which had survived since the Moslem conquest eight centuries ago came to an end. The Maldives are a large group of coral atolls scattered across hundreds of miles of ocean south-west of Ceylon. It is said that there are 8,000 of them, but the exact number has never been determined. Only 215 are inhabited today. On sea charts they are marked as a long chain of sinister grey dots reaching down beyond the Equator—a place for big ships to avoid because of the danger to navigation. Few visitors from the outside world ever call there. The remoteness and relative poverty of the islands has given them seclusion and peace.

I travelled down in H.M.S. *Ceylon*, a cruiser of the Royal Navy, which was to take part in the ceremonies. When we were thirty hours out from Colombo, the first group of islands emerged like a fleet of ships low down on the horizon. As we ploughed steadily across the empty sea they grew in size. Waving palm trees stood out against the serene tropical sky. Each island was laced with white surf breaking on hidden coral reefs. Inshore the sea changed colour from a brilliant cobalt blue to a vivid light green as the depths of the coral shelf varied. Flying fish skimmed past us as we nosed our way slowly through the only deep channel to anchor in a wide lagoon facing Male, the island capital. The cruiser fired a twenty-one-gun salute which was answered from the shore, the sound echoing across the sleepy lagoon and across 400 years of placid history. Heavy gunfire had not been heard in the Maldives since the Portuguese invasion in the sixteenth century.

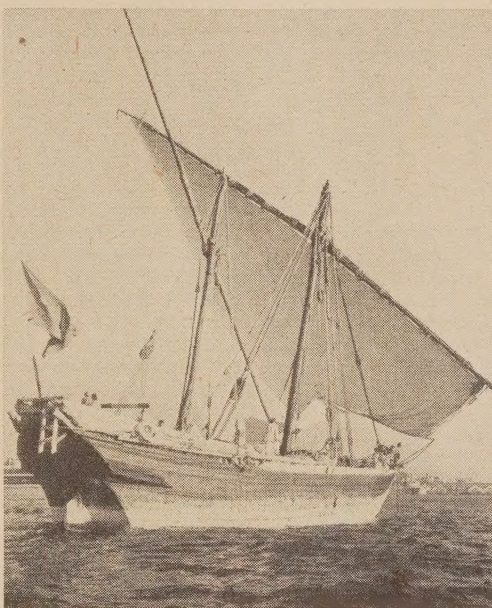
It was the period between monsoons, and the warmest time of the year. Male was nodding in the heat of the afternoon but the harbour was crowded to the water's edge with people waiting to greet us. They were mostly men, swarthy-skinned, all dressed alike in coloured shirts or sarongs. Physically they were quite small, with beautifully modelled features. Their smiling welcome was unmistakable, but we immediately came up against the barrier of language. Maldivian is an amalgam of Arabic, Hindustani and Sinhalese, with a script and literature of its own. No one in our party had ever heard it before, and very few of the islanders speak English. We mimed and gesticulated, until the postmaster, who had been educated in Ceylon,

arrived to make things easy. After that the quayside post office became our informal headquarters ashore. We retired there to drink fresh lime-juice when the heat became oppressive. Male has no *cafés* or hotels in the western sense. We sought information and dumped our surplus luggage there, and finally we all but cleaned them out of the new stamps, specially printed to commemorate the Republic. They were given to a small boy in the office to be franked. We were the first customers of the day and he had to alter the date on the cancellation stamp. He did it wrongly and the date became January 1, 1935. We pointed out the mistake in time and had it corrected. Knowledgeable officers on the ship told us later that this was a very silly thing to do. We had ignored a basic principle of philately, that a mistake adds value to a stamp.

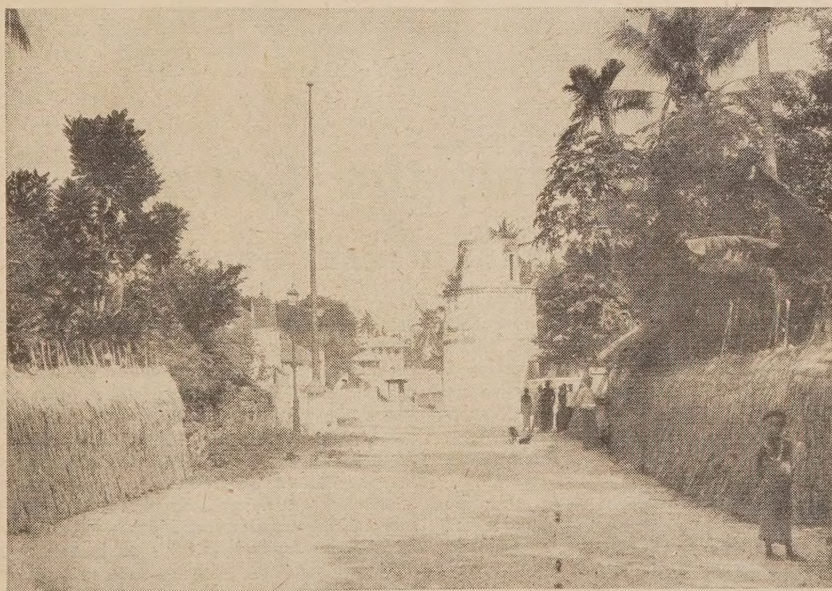
The town of Male covers the entire island on which it is built, an area less than a mile square. The sea is visible from any part of it, and there is no escape from the constant roar of the surf breaking over the reefs. My first and abiding impression of the capital was its incredible cleanliness—a toy town in the tropics. All the houses and the high walls surrounding them had been newly whitewashed, and the streets, surfaced with coral, were bleached in the sun. The glare was intense and painful. I had been warned beforehand that a pair of sunglasses was much more important than a hat, and so it was. Every householder is made responsible for his own strip of road, which he sweeps at least once a day. The system works without coercion or penalties. There is no police force in the Maldiv Islands and very little crime. Traffic is no problem because there are no horses or bullocks, and therefore no carts. Until recently there was only one car in the whole Republic. Now there are three,

all belonging to the Government. The rule of the road is a paper formality. The town is a jay walker's paradise where no traffic accident has ever been reported.

The high walls round the houses are a feature of the town, a relic of the days when strict purdah was observed. The Maldivians are devout Sunni Moslems. Islam has survived here in all its austere purity. The people neither drink nor smoke. The many mosques are beautifully looked after and a visitor will come away wondering, until it is explained to him, why he has not seen a single dog on any of the islands. Moslems, as a rule, do not approve of dogs. Until recently a woman or a young girl would



A buggalow: the craft, peculiar to the Maldives, from which the islanders fish with rod and line



Street in Male, capital of the Maldiv Islands, 'a toy town in the tropics'

never venture out of doors without wearing a heavy veil. Two years ago, through the influence of the new President, Mr. Amin Didi, purdah was abolished by a stroke of the pen. Not all the women are yet accustomed to their new-found freedom. When I was wandering through the town with friends from the ship, we were occasionally overtaken by a group of young girls all wearing gaily coloured cotton dresses reaching down to the ground. The colours were not the vivid reds and blues you see in India, but delicate pastel shades like a fading rainbow, which emphasised the jet black flowing hair and the dark features. At the age of twelve, these young girls were fully grown and mature, and they walked with the deportment of queens. They would stop at a garden door and turn round to stare, torn between curiosity and shyness. When we approached, an elderly arm would protrude from inside the door and pluck at a sleeve, and the group would disappear, reluctantly and obediently, indoors. If we took out a camera they simply fled.

But all this is gradually changing. The more promising girls are being sent to school in Ceylon, and women played a prominent part in the ceremonies on Republic Day. They have entered parliament, and the Leader of the House of the People, and the Speaker of the Senate, are both women. That is the measure of their emancipation in the short interval of two years.

The Maldivian Islands were invaded by the Portuguese during the sixteenth century, and relics of the occupation still survive. I was shown the remains of two old forts, overgrown with palm trees and lush vegetation, their ruined bastions crumbling in the sun. And all round the island old muzzle-loading cannon, rusty and falling apart, are still sited at strategic points aimed at openings in the coral reef through which another invader might come. The Portuguese of those early days left behind a legacy which is still actively preserved, a marine tradition and the craft of shipbuilding which gives the people their livelihood. Fish accounts for ninety-eight per cent. of the islands' exports; without it they could not exist. The specially processed Maldivian fish has a ready market in Ceylon. In exchange the Maldivians buy rice, their staple food. Hardly any grain is grown on the islands. And it is here, on this subject of food, that the remote republic of the Maldives has recently felt the impact of world affairs. Rice is scarce and expensive throughout the east, while the price of fish has risen only slightly. An official of Male told me—and his technical explanation sounded strange in that remote place: 'The terms of trade have turned against us'.

The chief fishing is done with rod and line in craft called buggalows, which are peculiar to the Maldives. They are built at Male with infinite care and skill. They resemble a print of an old brigantine, more graceful than Arab dhows, the stern built high and painted in many colours. For their size they carry a very heavy burden of sail. My best memory of Male is of these little ships riding at anchor in the lagoon; the sea and the sky a matchless blue, the surf breaking into rich cream against the background of tall palm trees, while exotic birds dipped and wheeled overhead. The buggalows fish far afield, and they ply regularly to Colombo nearly 500 miles away. The trip sometimes takes a month—if the monsoon is against them. I tried, through the help of an inter-

preter, to find out their method of navigation. The fishermen told me they had no compass because they could not afford one. Instead, they rely on the trade winds, a crude knowledge of the stars, and an instinctive love of the sea. Recently, however, the Government opened a school of navigation in Male. Fishing apart, the other industries are small: lacquer work, mat weaving, copra, and collecting the lovely sea-shells from neighbouring reefs.

During the last war, the Royal Air Force established a small base at Addu, the southernmost atoll. At Male, those days of friendly co-operation are still spoken of with affection. The R.A.F. sent a Sunderland flying-boat to Male for the ceremonies. One afternoon I was a guest of the crew in the little island home which was built for them during the war and has been carefully preserved for them ever since. We had a spacious stone bungalow, a hard tennis-court, a magnificent beach, and the tiny island 200 yards across, all to ourselves. The odd flying-boat visits the Maldives at long intervals, but the bungalow is always ready for use, and a sailing-boat to take passengers across from Male. They call it R.A.F. Island, a welfare officer's dream.

The birth of the Republic of the Maldivian Islands, and the social and economic reforms now under way there, are almost entirely the creation of one man—the new President, Mr. Amin Didi. He belongs to the former ruling family, and could have been sultan if he wished, but the sultan is traditionally tied to the islands, and Mr. Didi, who was educated in Ceylon and India, likes to travel. He visits London about once a year, and the Maldivian Islands, under his influence and guidance, are adopting the ways of western democracy. I first spoke to him in his modest official residence in the centre of Male. On the walls were hung pictures of the British Royal Family—a symbol of the close and cordial relations between the two countries—and in one corner an inscribed photograph of the late President Roosevelt, acknowledging the help given by the islanders to distressed American sailors during the war. Mr. Didi told me of his aspirations for his country, especially in the field of trade and education. Under a special clause in the new constitution which was adopted on January 1, he is both President and Prime Minister of the Republic, probably a unique combination. He governs paternally a population of nearly 90,000 people, and one of the political problems facing him today is the lack of an organised opposition. Mr. Didi is the first to admit that he would like to see one. The two newspapers published on the island—one appears fortnightly, the other monthly—both support the Government. The fish trade with Ceylon on which the islands entirely depend for a living is also in effect a government monopoly, exercised through a local co-operative.

The smiling Maldivians were, I think, the happiest people I have encountered in the east. Political problems hardly impinge on their uneventful day; living is fairly easy, and they pay no income tax. For economic and racial reasons the islands maintain close and friendly relations with Ceylon which is, in a sense, a foster country to them. They have a common ancestry dating back 2,000 years, and any young Maldivian who dreams of the wide world outside thinks first of Ceylon—'Lanka'—the President calls it by its native name—'Lanka, our dear neighbour'.—*Home Service*

On Helping the Colonies

By ARTHUR HAZLEWOOD

BOTH the Conservative and Labour Parties are agreed on the main lines of colonial policy. In the economic field both parties are committed to a policy of 'development and welfare'. Higher living standards and more developed economies are considered to be desirable in themselves as well as a necessary foundation for self-government. If the colonial peoples in Africa, south-east Asia, and other parts of the world are to have a better life they must be helped, so the argument runs, by this country.

Of the need for economic and social improvements there can be no doubt. A harrowing picture of conditions in the colonies can be obtained from official publications. A report on the Gambia speaks of 'a vicious circle of poverty, malnutrition, infestation with parasites, and infections'. In Lagos, of every 1,000 children born, more than 100 die within a year; in this country the figure is less than thirty. In this

country there are, on average, less than 1,000 people for every doctor, whereas in Nigeria there is only one doctor for every 70,000 of the population. Examples of this sort could be multiplied.

Development and welfare policy, the argument continues, is not meant to imply perpetual charity. The colonies are to be helped to stand on their own feet. Money given now will help to raise labour productivity and national incomes. Better food, health, and education may in themselves promote economic progress, as well as being its consequence. It has recently been said of the Gold Coast that 'ill health and under-nourishment are important factors in reducing the efficiency of labour, thereby increasing production costs and generally retarding economic development'. But there must also be improvements in agricultural equipment and methods, the development of communications and power and water supplies, and the introduction of new industries.

The colonies are too poor to do these things unaided, yet without them they will remain poor. Help from outside can break the vicious circle of poverty—low productivity—poverty in which colonial economies are imprisoned.

Incidentally, this country also stands to gain from development in the colonies. Materially there will be the advantage of increased output of colonial raw materials to supply our industry and to sell for dollars. The proposed Volta River Scheme, for producing aluminium in the Gold Coast, clearly illustrates this aspect of colonial development. Then there are believed to be political advantages. It is thought that improved living standards will bring political and social stability and weaken the possible attractions of communism. As Mr. Herbert Morrison once put it: 'We want to help the colonies along, and in helping them along to help ourselves along at the same time'. Thus the policy is a compound of charity and self-interest—'philanthropy plus five per cent.' in a new guise.

There are several ways in which the colonies have obtained money from outside. This country's most important public contribution has been the money provided by the various Colonial Development and Welfare Acts. The first of them was passed in 1940, but little could be done during the war. Further Acts, since the war, have made available a total of £140,000,000 to be spent over a period of ten years. This money is to pay for part of the ten-year development plans which colonial governments have drawn up. Other finance for the plans is to come from loans and local taxation. These plans list the expenditures on communications, irrigation and drainage, soil conservation, health, education, and so forth, which the colonial governments intend to carry out. They are designed to create the social and economic framework for further development, by both public authorities and private enterprise. From the total £140,000,000 of Colonial Development and Welfare money, £55,000,000 had actually been spent by March, 1952. This may look a large sum in total, but it amounts to only 15s. 9d. for each of the colonies' 70,000,000 inhabitants over the past six years; or an average of 2s. 7½d. for each person each year. Less than the price of a packet of cigarettes a year will not provide much of a social and economic framework, nor is it likely to break the 'vicious circle' of poverty, malnutrition, and disease. A parliamentary committee which investigated development expenditure in Nigeria concluded that 'if the ten-year plan were carried out overnight the improvement in the condition of the mass of Nigerians would be hardly perceptible'.

Money for Productive Enterprises

Funds from the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts are essentially gifts, to be spent by colonial governments on projects which are unlikely to bring a direct financial return. The money provided for the Colonial Development Corporation, on the other hand, is supposed to be spent on productive enterprises which, taken together, can be expected to earn enough to pay interest on the capital laid out. The corporation was set up under the Overseas Resources Development Act of 1948. Under the same Act there was also established the Overseas Food Corporation, the administering body of the ill-fated East African ground-nuts scheme. The Colonial Development Corporation can spend up to £110,000,000 in all, and by the end of 1951 it had spent a little over £21,000,000. Some of this expenditure, however, had been on schemes like the Gambia poultry farms in which a great deal of capital was lost.

Let me do no more than make passing reference to Tanganyika ground-nuts. It must be said, though, that the £30,000,000 to £40,000,000 spent in the hope of easing Britain's fats shortage all go into the total of colonial development expenditure. The counterpart of the money—the machines, pipelines, and what-not poured into East Africa, and now largely wasted—must all be counted as imports for development.

So far, I have mentioned British official funds. In addition E.C.A., or the Mutual Security Agency, as it is now called, has provided American funds for copper mining in Northern Rhodesia, bauxite mining in Jamaica, and for many other projects. Finally, there is capital from private sources. This takes the form both of subscriptions to loans floated by colonial governments and of direct investments by British and foreign companies in mining and other economic activities. Colonial governments have borrowed some £56,000,000 since the war, but no one knows quite how much private capital has been supplied in total.

Economic development with the aid of money from outside is not a new thing. Money provided by British business men has helped to develop the production for export of many of the raw materials which

are so important in the colonies—copper in Northern Rhodesia, sisal in East Africa, rubber and tin in Malaya, for instance. Many people are now inclined to stress the undesirable aspects of this kind of development. Certainly it has created lopsided economies, the fortunes of which are too dependent on the unstable demand for raw materials in other countries. And too often the investor has reaped a rich reward while the investment has contributed too little to the general development of the colony's economy or to the income of its people. Developments in the colonies since the war and plans for the future may be criticised on the ground that they do not depart sufficiently from this pattern of the past. Governments have always tried to provide a framework for the operations of private enterprise—roads and railways no less than law and order. It can be argued that investments now being made do little more than continue past trends, though with perhaps rather more emphasis on 'welfare', such as expenditure on hospitals and schools. I feel there is a good deal to be said for this point of view, but at the present time it is perhaps overshadowed in importance by the facts I now wish to discuss.

Trade Figures

The money the colonies have received as gifts or loans should have enabled them to buy from abroad more than they would otherwise be able to pay for. The colonies import from abroad textiles, foodstuffs, lorries, cement, iron and steel, and many other things. As they are largely agricultural countries, most of the manufactures they need must be imported. These imports are paid for with the money the colonies earn from their exports. Loans and gifts should make it possible for them to import more than they could pay for in this way. But the surprising fact is that they have not done so. The external trade figures of the colonies show that, during the five years from the beginning of 1947 to the end of 1951, total imports were less than total exports by as much as £261,000,000. Between 1947 and 1949, indeed, the colonies did import more than they exported. But with the booming demand for raw materials in 1950 and 1951, colonial exports increased rapidly, and imports did not keep pace. A comparatively small import surplus each year changed to a large surplus of exports.

Of course, not all the colonies contributed equally to this surplus. West Africa with its cocoa and Malaya with its tin and rubber were the areas mainly responsible for it. I should also mention a further qualification. I have been using trade figures, figures, that is, of trade in goods—visible trade as it is called. There are also the so-called invisible items in the balance of payments to be taken into account. Payment by the colonies of interest and profits on past investments from abroad probably constitute the most important element of this kind. To set against this, however, there are certain invisible receipts by the colonies. Although information about the invisible items is scanty, there is little doubt that the balance of them is not sufficiently large seriously to modify the general picture indicated by the trade figures.

The trade figures show that, over these five years, far from the colonies absorbing more imports than they could pay for with their exports, for one reason or another they spent on imports much less than they earned with their exports. Why was this? A number of reasons can be suggested. In some colonies, notably in West Africa, export products like cocoa, palm oil, and ground-nuts are marketed by statutory Marketing Boards which pay the producers less than they sell the commodity for on the world market. In this way the West African Boards have accumulated some £150,000,000. There has been much controversy about these boards, and I do not want to intrude into that argument now. Briefly, the idea is that by putting something to reserve when prices are high, the boards will be able to keep up the price they pay to the colonial producers when world market

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'The Listener' Index

The Index to Volume XLVIII (July to December, 1952) can be obtained free on application to the B.B.C. Publication Offices,
35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1

The Listener

What They Are Saying

Foreign broadcasts on Mr. Truman's farewell message

All communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.1. The articles in THE LISTENER consist mainly of the scripts (in whole or part) of broadcast talks. Original contributions are not invited, with the exception of poems and short stories up to 3,000 words, which should be accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. The reproductions of talks do not necessarily correspond verbatim with the broadcast scripts. Yearly subscription rates (including postage): inland and overseas, £1. Shorter periods, pro rata. Postage for single copies of this number: inland and overseas, 1½d. Subscriptions should be sent to the B.B.C. Publications Offices, 35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1, or any newsagent.

Art of Broadcasting

IN the winter number of *The B.B.C. Quarterly*, which is published next Monday, the contributors are concerned not simply with the technical achievements of radio but also with the values that those who are responsible for broadcasting systems should bear in mind when undertaking their work. One of the commonest criticisms directed against broadcasting is that it has been damaging to literature by diverting people into spoon-fed entertainment. Judging by the rough and ready test of the number of books published, this is not borne out by the latest figures, which have reached record heights. Sir Compton Mackenzie, in the first article in the *Quarterly*, recalls that in the first decade of the B.B.C. books 'played practically no part'. Whether that was so or not, he is happier now: 'I am much more anxious to praise what broadcasting has achieved for literature and drama in all three programmes than to grumble about what it has failed to do'.

Broadcasting is an art of communication. This phrase, though strange, is true. We do not think of telephoning as an art (though in fact it is); but letter-writing is obviously an art. And the B.B.C. is obliged not merely to provide by scientific means the best possible channels of communication but to pour into its machines the most excellent and well-balanced products of all the arts. In another article in the *Quarterly* Mr. Renford Bambrough asks himself what Plato's verdict on broadcasting would have been. Plato was deeply interested in the art of communication. Mr. Bambrough suggests that the Greek philosopher would have been satisfied with the machine but not with the products put into it. He would have objected that the Corporation spends too much of its time and money on mere entertainment, but that it might become a great force for good if Plato himself were Director-General and the Board of Governors consisted of Philosopher-Kings. Yet so broad a target is the B.B.C. that Plato ought to be aware that a popular condemnation of the Corporation, especially among those whose idea of heaven is a blend of melodrama and hot jazz, is that too much attention is devoted to uplift. Down with the Third Programme, say the critics, and set the people free. On the other hand, as recent writers have instructed us, there is an element of Fascism about Platonism, and it is certainly the responsibility of those engaged in organising broadcasting in this country to see that all points of view are fairly represented, lest the machine become a mere purveyor of either propaganda or poppycock.

'Broadcasting', Mr. Bambrough concludes, 'is uniquely fitted for the discussion of problems and questions about which there is a radical disagreement; that is, questions and problems to which we do not expect to find the right answers, or definitive solutions; questions like those of politics and religion, on which we must, however reluctantly, at last "agree to differ"'. Yet, Mr. Bambrough would probably agree, it is extremely tempting to take the line of least resistance, to cast on one side discussions of politics and religion on the ground either that they are so controversial as to be 'dangerous' or so difficult as to be boring. It is easy, too, to put on only programmes about subjects which happen to have 'hit the headlines', nailing one's colours to topicality rather than to contemporaneity. But should it not be said that a responsible system of broadcasting ought not to be devoted merely to the ephemeral, but should offer to the public, through the powerful instrument it has at its disposal, the fruits of the thought and discovery of the time, that men and women who are anxious for knowledge and enlightenment may be given a chance to obtain it?

MR. TRUMAN'S FAREWELL MESSAGE on 'the State of the Union' was hailed by many western commentators as a brilliant analysis of 'the state of the world'. *The New York Times* was quoted for the opinion that it would be remembered for its warning to potential aggressors that 'war has changed its shape and its dimensions', and for its reminder to Stalin that in this atomic age war can no longer be seen, as Lenin saw it, as a state in the development of anything except wholesale destruction. The newspaper continued:

The state of the Union in these first days of the New Year is hazardous. We live under the terrible shadow of vast new forces which we have not yet managed to discipline. We do not even know, in terms of the effort that still lies ahead of us, how far we have come along the road which we hope will lead to peace and security, for we do not know the real inner strength of the communist enemy that confronts us, nor can we be certain what tactics that enemy will employ to achieve its purpose of world domination. We can only assume that the test of strength will be long and hard and that it will require patience, courage, and a willingness to sacrifice small things for great objectives.

From Canada, the *Montreal Star* was quoted for describing Truman's message as 'a clear invitation to Stalin to come to terms while there is yet time'. It went on:

Over and above the discussion of atomic weapons and their use if necessary, Stalin may be more impressed by Mr. Truman's emphasis on the fact that there is a fundamental unity in the United States that remains untouched despite Soviet efforts to disrupt it. It is upon this fundamental unity that the hopes of the free nations largely rest.

Unity and solidarity among the free nations themselves may, however—in the opinion of several western commentators—be threatened by what the *Montreal Gazette* called France's 'destruction of the European Army Treaty'. From France the independent *Le Monde* was quoted as saying that it would appear that to gain the support of the Gaullists M. Mayer has agreed to a modification of the treaty. From western Germany several papers were quoted for the view that M. Mayer's action makes French ratification of the treaty doubtful.

Another subject dealt with by west German papers was the purge in eastern Germany, and, in particular, the emphasis which Communists in Germany are laying on the 'crime' of Zionism, with its inevitable anti-semitic accompaniments. According to a west Berlin paper:

It appears that everything else having failed in the Soviet zone, the Communists now want to appeal to the presumed anti-semitism of the German people. This, too, will fail, for the sufferings of Jewry under the Nazis have aroused sentiments quite contrary to unbridled anti-semitism in Germany.

From the United States, the *New York Times* was quoted as saying that the anti-semitism displayed at Prague was thought by many to be designed in part as an attempt to reawaken this sentiment in Germany. It added:

Communist and Fascist totalitarianism have long been recognised as different sides of the same coin, and Stalin has no moral scruples against using Hitler's weapons.

The east German radio continued to pour out accusations against the former Minister of Trade, Hamann, now under arrest, who is being made the scapegoat for the disastrous economic situation in east Germany. He was accused, among many other things, of 'intentionally carrying out measures designed to disorganise supplies' and of having created a 'capitalist centre of gravity inside the Ministry, which was directed by the west Berlin espionage and sabotage organisations'. But making Hamann the scapegoat for the economic chaos is obviously considered insufficient; for on January 11 Prague radio announced that economic and agricultural experts from the Soviet Union and all the satellite countries, including east Germany, were to meet in conference in Prague on January 13. Many western commentators expressed the belief that this conference had been called urgently to discuss the growing shortages of food and other essential goods in central and east Europe. As an example of this situation, Prague radio, on January 10, broadcast an announcement by the Czechoslovak Prime Minister saying that as a first step towards the abolition of rationing, the issue of ration cards would be restricted to those who really needed them because of the importance of their work. Others must either grow their own supplies or buy their food on the free market. He reminded his listeners that Czechoslovakia was now dependent on the Soviet Union for half her supplies of grain, which she would not receive unless exports were maintained.

Did You Hear That?

'FINGERS OF LIGHT'

'THE IDEA TOOK SHAPE one day in a City restaurant', said SAM HEPPNER in a talk in the Home Service. 'I was lunching with an old-established importer of North African dates who had recently spent some months in the oasis towns of Tunisia and Algeria. I have to admire his powers of description, because he conveyed the scenes and atmosphere of these exotic regions so vividly that I decided there and then to visit what he called "the most beautiful date gardens in the world".

'From Algiers I travelled down into the date country by bus, and when I reached Biskra my host lost no time in taking me on a tour of the various storehouses that seem to occupy a large part of the town. There they were: dates, dates, dates, piled high in great towers in those oblong cases, each weighing sixty pounds, and altogether containing thousands upon thousands of dates. While Arab and Negro workers sat cross-legged out in the sun and sorted and graded the dates, discarding those which were bruised or sandy, the merchants inside talked, haggled, gesticulated, and argued in a curious mixture of French and Arabic. The heat was intense, and the periodic arrival of an Arab boy with a tray bearing a little brass teapot of mint tea, decorated in Indian style, and half a dozen miniature tumblers, was most welcome. Every now and again, the conversation would reflect the chief worry of everyone in the date business. Would it rain? Rain and sandstorms are the two things that people fear most. Excessive moisture ruins the quality of the dates, and desert sandstorms fling quantities of sand against the fruit and this, of course, is very harmful.

'Presently I was taken to see the date gardens—long groves of palm trees standing at regular intervals in their yellow, mud-wall enclosures. They are watered by artesian wells, the first of which, I was told, had been bored in 1865. The trees growing there bear the precious strains which are harvested for the British market. It takes from fifteen to twenty years for a tree to yield a crop of commercial value, after which it may continue to bear fruit for 200 years. I was astonished to learn that there are more than 150 varieties of the date. The ones that reach us are the *deglet nour* variety. *Deglet nour* means 'finger of light', and these dates are so called because of their transparency and light amber colour.

'I have seen palm trees in many parts of the world, but I have never seen any to compare with the North African date palms for sheer beauty. The leaves intermingle in a delicate tracery of brilliant emerald green. This emphasises the yellow-gold of the unripe dates hanging below the leaves in large clusters that weigh anything from forty pounds upwards. Sometimes the leaves extend in a graceful semi-circle for twenty feet or more. The tree has no branches, only leaves, and the trunk consists of pruned leaf stems which provide a natural foothold to the young Arab boys who scale them with incredible agility, sever the clusters and lower them by ropes to prevent injury to the fruit. Some of the trees reach a height of fifty or sixty feet, and the job is therefore a dangerous one.

'Native workers collect the clusters of dates, which have been laid out on nets, and carry them on large, horizontal trays like stretchers to a curious sort of building. It is Moorish in style, with no roof, and

has four white walls with large openings to admit the sunlight. The clusters of dates are hung out on the walls to receive the full benefit of the sun before they are sent to the packing stations. I wonder if this partly explains why, of all fruits, dates have the highest content of natural sugar, magnesia salt, phosphate, and vitamins A and B, and are said to possess the same calorific value as a juicy beefsteak.

'The process of fertilisation is aided by man. The desert winds may carry the pollen from the male trees and deposit it by chance in the blooms of the female. But nature, of course, is tremendously wasteful



Date palms in Algeria, and, left, an Arab boy picking the dates, which hang in heavy golden clusters



and it is the law of the desert, laid down by the prophet Mohammed, that the cultivators must collect flowers from the male trees, climb to the top of the female trees with the cuttings in their mouths and sprinkle the pollen within. As a precaution against the failure of the male trees during any year, stores of pollen are collected and preserved for future use'.

A LANCASHIRE WOMAN OF PARTS

'Betty Raffald', said GEOFFREY NULTY in 'The Northcountryman', was the daughter of Joshua Whitaker, a well-respected citizen of Doncaster. She was born in 1733, had a fair education, and then passed about fifteen years in the service of various families. Her last employer was Lady Elizabeth Warburton, at Arley Hall, near Northwich, in Cheshire. Arley Hall was later the temporary home of Louis Napoleon, later Napoleon III of France. Its grounds still bear traces of some remarkable landscape gardening, which was the work of John Raffald, who was head gardener when Betty Whitaker was housekeeper. John, it is recorded, was a fine figure of a man, and a capable botanist and florist. His family had been seedsmen in Stockport since the reign of Edward VI. Betty and John were married at Great Budworth in 1763.

'Immediately after the wedding, they left for Manchester, where John and his brother set up a seedsman's stall in the Market Place. Mrs. Raffald opened a confectioner's shop at the corner of Exchange Alley. She took in pupils to learn cookery and domestic economy, and she is

said to have invented Eccles cakes. Here, no doubt, she experimented with her ornate table decorations, silver web and artificial flowers, gilded fish in jelly; and introduced her pupils to eggs and bacon in flummery, a Solomon's temple, syllabubs, and salmagundi.

'Mrs. Raffald took the Bull's Head, in the Market Place, and in spite of an increasing family—she had sixteen daughters in eighteen years—she gained a reputation for her "public dinners and private entertainments". Some years later, she took over a large and important hostelry, the King's Head, in Salford, which was much used by foreign travellers. It may have been their innumerable queries which prompted her to write the first *Directory of Manchester and Salford*, which ran into three editions.

'Although she was worried about her husband's intemperate habits, she was active in a dozen different directions. She opened what was probably the first registry office for servants in Manchester and assisted in the carrying on of Harrop's *Manchester Mercury*, and in starting *Prescott's Journal*, another local newspaper. *The Experienced English Housekeeper* appeared in 1769, six years after her marriage. Few well-regulated households were without it, for it ran into thirteen editions between 1769 and 1806. Mr. Baldwin, a London publisher, was said to have paid Mrs. Raffald £1,400 for the copyright in 1773, and there were at least another twenty-three pirated or spurious editions.

'Mrs. Raffald had always been interested in medicine. Several herbal remedies seem to have crept into the *Housekeeper*, such as peppermint water, hephnatic water for gravel, and so on. Betty Raffald was only forty-eight when on April 19, 1781, she died suddenly of "spasms". She was buried in Stockport Parish Church, near many of her husband's ancestors'.

ROPE

'The smell of rope—good tarry old marlin, and strong hemp, and bright-yellow manila—and the feel of rope, these things get me in my mind back aboard a ship faster than anything else', said ALAN VILLIERS, in a talk in the Home Service. 'Of all rope, the first and best is hemp. We used to get coils and coils of it by the ton in big sailing ships. It was brought alongside in a lighter when the ship was fitting out. In the great steel ships of later days, wire and chain took the place of much of the cordage of earlier times, but still, in the last analysis, our safety under sail lay in rope. Every piece had to be good; if it was not, it could kill somebody—as did the fore t'gall'nt halliards in the ship *Grace Harwar*, which carried away suddenly and allowed the yard to come down.

'In the very old days, of course, it was usual to make a good deal of the ship's rope aboard. Cables were made of chain by the time I went to sea, though I was along with lanyard rigging. We used to make spun-yarn: it was a trade wind job when the decks were dry. We had a hand-operated machine that was used for laying the strands together, and the main deck was the rope-walk. It was a nice tarry job—Stockholm tar, of course. Stockholm tar goes with good cordage. We would make all sorts of things for the rigging out of rope, even though we did not make the rope itself. A sailing ship needed as much dolling up as a young woman. We would make robands, and grommets, and baggy-wrinkle, and rat-lines for the rigging, and cringles with big thimbles in them, for shackling blocks into. Baggy-wrinkle was chafing-gear that was wrapped around the rigging wherever there was serious chafing, say, where the bellies of the big, square sails would chafe or rub on the fore stay, or the main topmast stay.

'There are other kinds of rope besides hemp and manila, of course. There's coir, which is made from the husks of coconuts. The old sailors called it 'keye-arr', and they did not like it much. It was terrible stuff to work with when it was wet. And it stretched. It was used a great deal in Indian Ocean vessels, and still is. I remember watching the dhow mariners of old Kuwait, and Muscat, and Ma'alla by Aden,

laying the stuff from the husks of Indian coconuts. They used it for the running rigging of their big dhows—those lovely, big vessels that still make their annual trading voyages from the Persian Gulf down the eastern seaboard of Africa, as far as the monsoon blows. I was a year in those dhows once.

'I have been along with grass ropes, too, in the bankers. A banker is a small sailing ship that goes across and anchors on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland or up in Davis Straits, and fishes herself full of salt cod. Rope is very important to them, and they used to carry enormous hawsers—miles and miles of them—that they used as cable, and lay-to while they fished.

'Then there is sisal. It is sisal cordage that rigs the ancient *Victory* now (she would do better with hemp but hemp is scarce). And there is nylon, nowadays—nylon rope. I was aboard a barque in the Shadwell Basin a year or two ago with nylon rope. She had a soft-drinks machine, too, and a big diesel engine'.



MUSEUM OF MAGIC

Most of the great magicians of today will tell you that their interest in magic was first aroused by a present of a box of conjuring tricks when they were children. Some of these youthful tricks are now in the museum of the Magic Circle in London, and CHARLES GARDNER, the B.B.C. Air Correspondent, who happens to be a member of the Circle, described the museum in an 'Eye-witness' report.

'People who have something of magical interest to pass on', he said, 'are usually in little doubt as to where it should go: "Give it to the Magic Circle", they say, and there, in the Circle Museum, if it is of sufficient calibre to justify the honour, it finds its place.

'Magic, like everything else, has its fashions, and fads and fancies. In this museum one can see them all. The flamboyant era, for instance, when great and gaudy props filled the stage, and Robert Houdin, whom the French Government once sent to quieten the Arabs, by showing them "white man's magic", was appearing nightly at his own little theatre in Paris 100 years ago. In the museum is a playbill of his announcing "The Inexhaustible Bottle", a trick which, one would imagine, he certainly took on his pacifying mission to Algeria.

And earlier than that, in 1818, we have a Mr. Ingleby with two new laid eggs, "out of one of which will come a baby, and out of the other", he says, "a set of child's linen, and a recipe for the toothache". On these old bills magician still vies with magician in the files of the Circle's Museum. "Fun without Vulgarity" claims one—doubtless knocking hard at some empurpled rival, "Emperor of all the Conjurors" claims another; while, more simply, a Mr. Wingard announces that he is the "Father of all".

'The "professor" era, when every conjuror scorned anything less than a chair in the University of Hocus Pocus, is well represented—"Professor Norris of the Crystal Palace" being a collector's piece. There he is, a man with a beard, a great man in mystic robes and a crown, a mixture of the Biblical and the medieval; and it comes as something of a shock to discover that this august figure also put out advertising matter offering boxes of tricks at half a guinea, and lessons in carpentry.

'The actual apparatus is equally fascinating: Chung Ling Soo's fishing rods, Maskelyne's plate-spinning platform, Charles Bertram's linking rings, and masterpieces made by the immortal houses of Hyam and Bland. Here, too, are handbags used by Dr. Holden who amazed, and we hope amused, Queen Victoria by producing them from an empty hat'.

In our note last week congratulating Mr. B. E. Nicolls, lately Director of Home Broadcasting, and acting Director-General, B.B.C., on receiving a knighthood in the New Year's Honours List, his previous honours should have read C.V.O., C.B.E.

The Intellectual and Politics

By ANGUS MAUDE, M.P.

I SUPPOSE it was during the nineteen-thirties that people began to talk about 'left-wing intellectuals', as though all the intelligentsia were socialists. Today the word 'intellectual' is used by many people almost as a term of abuse. You may have noticed that the breed is often described as 'long-haired', as well as 'left-wing'. The poor intellectual has had transferred to him all the mistrustful and uncomprehending dislike with which athletic undergraduates used to regard the so-called aesthetes. Obviously, this is a subject cloudy with prejudice. Words and expressions change their meanings in different mouths. Strictly speaking, I suppose, an intellectual is defined as a person who tends to tackle a problem by exercising his powers of reasoning, on a basis of known and proven facts. But of course this is not at all what people mean when they talk about 'long-haired' or 'left-wing' intellectuals. I think what most people mean by the word—in politics, anyway—is someone whose approach to a problem is theoretical or academic.

Three Categories

The true intellectual, as I have defined him, is fairly rare. Those who fall within the popular definition are swayed by a mixture of reason and emotion. The proportions of the two ingredients vary from the austere extreme of almost pure reason to an emotionalism which is sheer instability. Perhaps these men and women can be graded into three categories: the true intellectuals; the 'emotionals', and the 'psychologicals'. All of them possess high intelligence, brains, and imaginations developed by better-than-average schooling, fairly good powers of observation, and an addiction to reading and talk. Is there a marked tendency for these people to go to the left in politics?

I am sure there is, among those whose outlook is most predominantly intellectual, and it has been so for at least the past 100 years. I cannot escape the conclusion that there is something inherent in their outlook—perhaps the result of academic training—which causes it. I suppose it could be argued that they have an instinctive enmity towards property because they are generally without inherited wealth themselves, and because they practise professions which do not often permit the making of fortunes. But then some of the leading intellectual socialists have, in fact, been quite wealthy people. No, obviously the prime motive is a genuine intellectual conviction.

Most of the intelligentsia, especially if they are scientists, are trained to seek a rational solution to every problem. What is more, they like the solution to be not only logical but complete. They hate untidiness, loose ends, exceptions, and anomalies. They loathe inefficiency, uncertainty, and the kind of equilibrium that is reached after many swings of the pendulum. They tend to believe that nearly every problem can be solved by collecting the relevant information, analysing the difficulties, and firmly imposing the remedy that reason suggests will work.

It is precisely this sort of solution that left-wing doctrines purport to offer. Today—leaving aside the details, the success or failure of any particular plan—the idea of the planned economy is the perfect rational solution to most of our problems. The appeal to the intellectual is immense. The solution seems to dispense with the pendulum swings of the free economy, with the untidiness of thousands of independent and conflicting economic actions, and with the menace of apparently blind and unpredictable forces. What is more, it provides the machinery for the planned redistribution of wealth that is held to be desirable in the interests of what is known as social justice. The cynic might possibly add the observation that all the planning—and therefore the supreme power—is necessarily left in the hands of intellectuals. Hence the theory of the managerial revolution.

This predilection for planning is not more than about seventy years old; it really dates from the early days of the Fabians. Yet the mid-Victorian intellectuals also tended to the left. Why did not they support the Conservative Party when it stood for the greater measure of state intervention in economic affairs? The answer is simple. In the heyday of nineteenth-century liberalism the doctrine of free trade, of *laissez-faire* and open competition, was the perfect intellectual solution

to the economic problems of the day. For 100 years economists had been stressing the theoretical perfection of the system, proving that the forces of competition in an open market would increase production and prosperity for all. It had the supreme merit of being both logical and self-adjusting. To doubt it was not only foolish but almost blasphemous. Intellect and emotions were gloriously at one: Liberal eyes were dazzled with the wondrous certainty of a steady and ineluctable progress towards human perfection and fabulous prosperity. It seems strange to us that the mid-Victorian intellectuals were so ready to abrogate responsibility for economic affairs, especially when most of them regarded business men as rather coarse and unsatisfactory people. After all, the development of industry was clearly producing a great many difficult social problems. But apart from the fact that the economists had warned them to keep off the grass, they were busy with political and administrative matters. Retrenchment and reform were in the air. Retrenchment had rather hobbled reform, but nevertheless two fundamental principles, essential to the intellectual's peace of mind, were realised in 1870. The foundations were laid for universal compulsory education, which with access to the ballot-box was to be the gateway to the millennium for the masses: and open competitive examination was substituted for patronage as the method of entry to the public service. Intellect, properly developed by schooling, was thus established as the basis of government.

In fact, there have always been three fundamental differences between left and right which make toryism repugnant to a great many intellectuals. The left has always believed in three things: the possibility of a complete systematic solution to economic problems; the perfectibility of man; and the proposition that thorough education for all will produce a rational, and therefore a good, society. The tory rejects all these propositions.

The Tory View

Toryism may not be wholly founded on the doctrine of Original Sin: but certainly the tory believes, with Flecker, that 'men are unwise, and curiously planned'. This leads him to pin his faith not on a powerful, all-directing state machine but on an organic society whose collective wisdom—conserved through established institutions—will be greater than the total wisdom of the individuals composing it. 'We are afraid', said Burke, 'to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect that the stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations and of ages'. The tory believes—and in this the psychologists and intelligence-testers seem to bear him out—that good brains are pretty rare, and that there are limits to the ability of education to instil wisdom into the rest. And, finally, he is profoundly sceptical of systematic political solutions; however logical and all-embracing, he believes they will not remain relevant for very long, or deal with all the myriad individual problems that arise without intolerable strains. Having observed in one century a 'perfect intellectual solution' which involved individualism and complete *laissez-faire*, and in the next another which involved the precise opposite, he prefers a more empirical approach.

This tory view does not amount, of course, to a flat rejection of the intellect in politics; but it gives far less weight and scope to *a priori* reasoning than the intellectual would like. Moreover, it means that the tory can never quite conform with the current fashion in economics or sociology. Having seen it tested in practice, he may extract from this system or that whatever seems to him good and useful. Often his acceptance will come rather late in the day, and often he will borrow either too little or too much. But the too much he borrows will seldom be as much too much, he thinks, as the whole of what he is offered. The general effect is somewhat untidy, but also much duller than the exciting discoveries and confident experiments in 'social engineering' that the enthusiasms of the left can offer to the intellectual.

Now what about the 'emotionals', the highly educated people whose political opinions are formed under the influence of emotions

rather than of reason? They do not all gravitate to the left, but the majority do. This is not surprising, for their dominant political emotion is usually the generous one of compassion for the poor; and, of course, the left has for some time been regarded as the champion of the under-dog, the enemy of privilege and property. Often their conversion is the result of sudden shock: a shattering revelation of living conditions previously undreamed of. A sensitive imagination (probably in revolt anyway against middle-class commercialism) does the rest. There is a passage in an essay of W. B. Yeats' which describes the attitude. He is writing of the young poets of the first world war. 'It was easier', he says, 'to look at suffering if you had somebody to blame for it, or some remedy in mind. Many of these poets have called themselves communists, though I find in their work no trace of the recognised communist philosophy and the practising communist rejects them . . . communism is their *Deus ex Machina*, their Santa Claus, their happy ending . . .'. Yeats rightly pointed out that this sort of conversion was not one of genuine intellectual conviction; but people with good brains and quick understanding can learn jargon fast and are adept at rationalising their emotions. Lenin once described Bernard Shaw as 'a good man fallen among Fabians', and—well, it does happen.

Words which Produce Paroxysms of Indignation

These people respond very quickly to emotional stimuli. There are certain words which act like a galvanic shock, producing paroxysms of quite genuine indignation. 'Reaction', is one such word, and, strangely enough, 'brewer' is another. I say strangely, because it is an interesting folk memory from the eighteen-seventies.

Not all the educated 'emotionals' move to the left, of course. But in the past not many of them have gravitated towards Toryism. Heaven knows there are plenty of members of the Conservative Party whose views and utterances are highly charged with emotion, but very few of them would fall within even the widest definition of an intellectual. Of course there are people in all parties who come well within the field of morbid psychology. Nevertheless I have known men of really high intelligence who were attracted to the right wing in politics for largely emotional reasons. Often they embrace a special brand of mystical Toryism, laced with a kind of transcendental Jacobitism, which they find intensely satisfying while it lasts. I have known some—mostly poets—who found modern industrial civilisation so wholly repulsive that they have withdrawn into a delicate eighteenth-century shell, from which can be heard emerging only an occasional, sad, harmonious sigh.

Mention of psychology reminds me that the experts have something to contribute here. The Freudian school, for instance, traces the economic motives of capitalism back to habits acquired in the middle-class nursery; according to this theory, hatred of money and the desire to destroy economic institutions spring from precisely the same source as the opposite, acquisitive preoccupation of the capitalist. It may be so. The thesis has been elaborated with a wealth of detail which I, personally, find rather repulsive (and I hope no psycho-analyst will write to inform me that this repulsion is a symptom of a repression or inhibition in myself, because I know that gambit and no longer rise).

Incidentally, there is a kind of so-called intellectuals, distinct from the 'emotionals' and only to be described as 'psychologicals'. They are the individuals who for purely personal reasons have reacted against the environment in which they were brought up. Some of them were flogged, or bullied, or just not properly appreciated, at Eton. Others disliked their parents, or their homes, the narrowness of a Puritan upbringing, or the emptiness of the opposite experience. Whatever it was, they became rebels, revolting either against their class or against society as a whole. There is nothing in socialism that makes any particular intellectual appeal to them. Those who started life in humbler homes sometimes become Conservatives, and are notable for their distressing hostility to the working class from which they sprang. Some of the most difficult specimens become fascists.

However, let us leave the morbid, and see whether there are any deductions for the future to be drawn from this study of past fashions and intellectual trends. If it is true that the politics of the right are naturally unattractive to a great number of intellectuals, will those of the left continue to make the same appeal as in the past? I think myself that the young intellectuals may be in for a rather difficult time. Several of the most important assumptions of the past seem to be breaking down.

How can we account for the swing to the right among university undergraduates? For some time now, Union political debates have been producing Conservative majorities as large as the pre-war socialist ones. I know most people say it is simply the natural tendency of youth

to be 'agin the government', and that a few more years of Conservative rule will reverse the trend. This is probably somewhere near the truth, but I do not think it is quite the right way of putting it. It seems to me that the emotional appeal of the left-wing champions of the 'under-dog' has perceptibly paled. I suspect that in the eyes of some young people the identity of the 'over-dog' may have changed; after six years of socialist government the state and the large public corporations may have supplanted the 'vested interest', the landlord and the capitalist, as the pet dragon for the young political knight errant.

I am not saying they are necessarily right in this view, or that the impression will last. But I think the appeal of a Labour Party which had never had a period of effective power was a very different one from that of a party which has had five years of absolute power and is now liable at any election to be called on to form a government. For one thing, it is inevitably bound, in office, to compromise the totality of its theoretical doctrine; and its policies will now be judged by their results rather than by their prospects. Before long the Labour movement may also feel the need of a fresh emotional appeal.

An elderly Tory once said to me, in a moment of expansion, that every decent man was a radical at the age of twenty, but that if he had sense as well as sensibility he grew out of it. I doubt if we shall ever live to see the reverse process become the rule, but I think the new generation is bound to suffer from some confusion of mind. I have no doubt that for some time the tougher intellectuals of the left will seek to widen the scope of economic planning, demanding more controls and more nationalisation; but this policy will have to achieve a striking success in practice to retain its appeal. Anyway, I will venture to make one prophecy. Sooner or later, a new and still more perfect intellectual solution will make its appearance. Possibly a great new prophet will arise, who will displace Marx as Marx displaced Bentham; or perhaps the psychologists will finally send the economists packing, and elaborate into an all-embracing creed a still more 'dismal science' than the last. Then the intellectuals will be happy once again; and the sceptical Tories will seem as 'stupid, old-fashioned, and reactionary as ever.

—Third Programme

A Galliard

Tongueless the forest now,
Under the arctic Plough;
Where she with lucid brow
Walked in fine weather;
Each bird of learned trill—
Woodlark and whippoorwill—
Sits, hunched, with tuneless bill
And drooping feather.

Here, where the turf was sweet,
Danced with their shoeless feet,
Faun-girls and dryads neat—
All her relations—
Culling delightful flowers
To decorate their bowers,
Through now quite cancelled hours,
In those plantations.

Goddess and Muse was she,
Patron of prosody,
Seeming benign to me
Till she had fled;
She has directed far
Venus, her silver car:
Saturn, a thoughtful star
Spins overhead.

This unkind season proves
I should forsake these groves,
Scene of our decent loves:
Northward I turn
Even in my distress
Knowing that none can guess
Her metamorphoses;
Or her return.

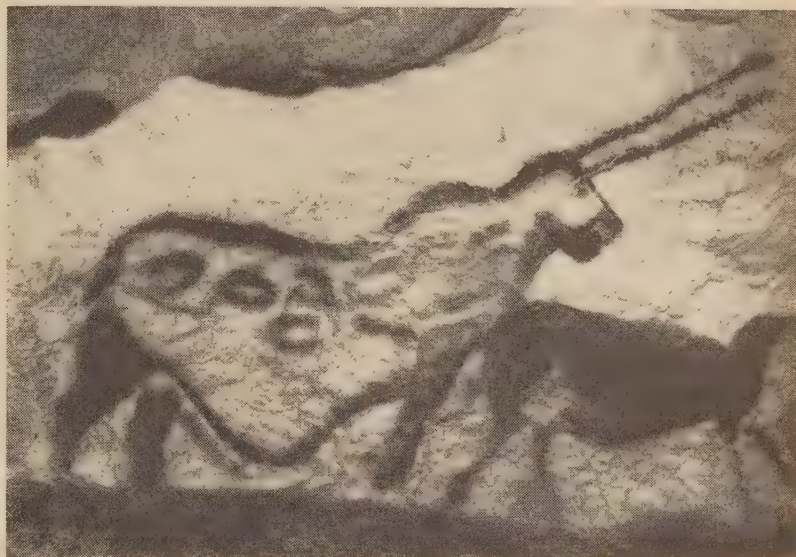
JOHN HEATH-STUBBS

The Abbé Breuil and Palaeolithic Art

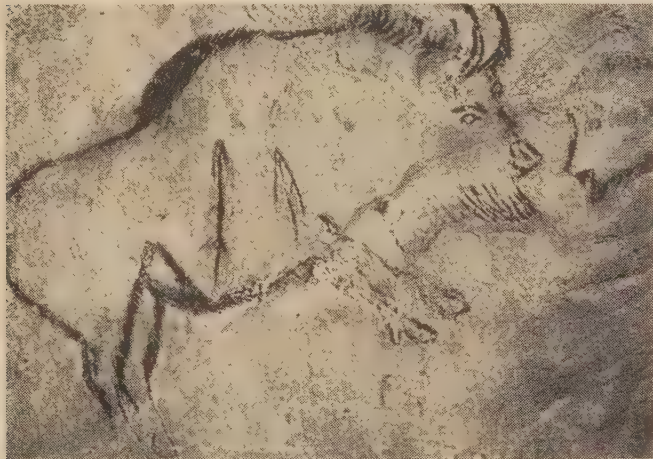
By GLYN DANIEL

IT is fifty years since the authenticity of upper palaeolithic cave art was proved to the satisfaction of most archaeologists, and became generally accepted: it was in 1902 that the archaeological world really changed its mind—or at least officially changed its mind—about this earliest phase of man's art. Henri Breuil, whose book I am considering here*, was much concerned with that change of mind and heart: he saw palaeolithic art come into its own and, in the past fifty years, has seen discovery after discovery being made until there can now be left in no one's mind any doubt about the authenticity and the importance of palaeolithic cave art.

The discovery of palaeolithic art is a matter of nineteenth-century archaeological history, and goes back not fifty but over a hundred years. There is no need to go over this story here, except in so far as it relates to the Abbé Breuil and the events of 1902. It had been proved by the 'sixties that palaeolithic man was an artist; tools and weapons with engraved designs had been found in palaeolithic deposits. These were objects of everyday use and ornament from domestic sites—examples of what has been variously called chattel art, or home art, or *art mobilier*. And there could be little dispute about the authenticity of this home art unless one chose to deny the whole basis of stratigraphical geology and archaeology. But cave art—the art on the



Imaginary animal (nicknamed 'The Unicorn') from Lascaux; the body resembles a rhinoceros, while the head is said to be like that of a Tibetan antelope, the pantholops



Bison, from Niaux: it is pierced by arrows and is facing another bison, which is smaller and unfinished

walls of some of the inhabited rock shelters but mainly on the walls of the deep natural caves not lived in by man—was quite another problem. Its authenticity was hotly disputed from the time when the first discoveries were made at Altamira in north Spain by the Marquis de Sautuola. This was in 1875.

Henri Breuil grew up in the last decades of the nineteenth century, when palaeolithic cave art was such a disputed issue. It was right at the end of the century that discoveries were made which changed the minds of those who did not believe in Altamira. In 1895 a peasant proprietor began to clear away the deposits that filled a rock shelter on his land; by chance in doing this work he discovered a gallery leading away into the hillside. Four young lads armed with candles boldly scrambled into this gallery; one of them had studied a little, and it was he who recognised the engraving of a bison on the wall of the newly found gallery. He told the French archaeologist Emile

Rivière, and Rivière began to excavate there at once. Thus was La Mouthe found: it is not far from the now famous village of Les Eyzies in the Dordogne. Rivière found more paintings and engravings and announced his discoveries in 1896 to the Académie des Sciences in Paris. Many recognised the significance of La Mouthe at once; the paintings and engravings had been found after the deposits filling the entrance had been cleared away, and these deposits were full of palaeolithic tools. There was really no way round the evidence at La Mouthe; and the paintings were stylistically analogous with Altamira. All this Rivière said, but both he and La Mouthe were the objects of attacks as violent, and as extravagant, as those on the Marquis of Sautuola and Altamira.

Henri Breuil, then, grew to manhood in archaeology while the news of La Mouthe was reviving the old attacks on Altamira. In September 1901 it was his good fortune, together with Dr. Capitan and Peyronny, to be able to announce to the world the discovery of two more decorated caves—two of the most famous of decorated palaeolithic caves—Font de Gaume and Les Combarelles. Both are near Les Eyzies, and not



Galloping wild boar, from Altamira: a pastel by the Abbé Breuil

* *Four Hundred Centuries of Cave Art*. By the Abbé H. Breuil. English distributors, Zwemmers. £7.

far from La Mouthe itself. At first the critics were no kinder—perhaps, one might say, no more reasonable—to Font de Gaume and Combarelles than they had been to Altamira and La Mouthe. In 1902 the French Association for the Advancement of Science met at Montauban, not far from Les Eyzies, for its annual conference. The critics set on the new Dordogne discoveries with fury. Most of the critics had not been to Les Eyzies: they condemned the new finds, as they had condemned Altamira, unseen. But the programme of the Montauban conference was designed to include a visit to Les Eyzies. Honest savants were allowed to form their own opinion as they looked at the engraved mammoths on the walls of Font de Gaume, as they saw with their own eyes the way in which the gallery at La Mouthe had been found, as they examined the ancient stalagmitic concretions which covered some of the innumerable paintings at Font de Gaume and Combarelles. They looked and were convinced. The sceptics could be sceptical no longer. Cartailhac himself, hitherto one of the main opponents of palaeolithic cave art, immediately sat down and recanted in a paper called *Mea Culpa d'un Sceptique*. Upper palaeolithic cave art was not the art of infants, it was the infancy of art.

Cartailhac immediately took the young Breuil off to Altamira, and together they entered that great cave for the first time—the old man who had been converted by La Mouthe, and the young Breuil, about twenty-five years old at the time, who had always believed in palaeolithic art and who was to devote so much of the next fifty years of his life to its study. But the turning point was La Mouthe, and in *Four Hundred Centuries of Cave Art*—in its way another turning point—Breuil publishes a photograph of the entrance to the cave taken during the Montauban excursion. It is a fascinating, historic, and most appropriate document. Here are the great men of French prehistory grouped around the entrance: Rivière, Cartailhac, de Mortillet, and, with them, the young Breuil. During the half-century that separates this family album photograph from its republication today, what discoveries Breuil has seen made in palaeolithic cave art! Les Trois Frères and Tuc d'Audoubert in the French Pyrenees, for example; Castillo, Hornos de la Pena, and many others in the Spanish Cantabrian mountains; and then, as recently as 1940, in the Dordogne, only fifteen miles from La Mouthe, Lascaux, that best preserved of all the palaeolithic painted caves, discovered too, like La Mouthe, by the adventurous curiosity and courage of four lads.

Some of these discoveries have been fully published: Altamira, for example, and Font de Gaume, and Les Combarelles; the Cantabrian caves, and Lascaux—and in most of these publications the Abbé Breuil has played a major part. He has, year after year, spent months at a time in these dark caves in south France and north Spain tracing and copying the engravings and paintings. Indeed, he has worked so hard that some have said uncharitably that we know palaeolithic cave art mainly through the eyes and hands of the Abbé Breuil. But until the present publication, although there have been monographs on certain caves, and general books on palaeolithic art as a whole, there has been no full and comprehensive publication on cave art. This is the great value of the present work. It lists all the sites of Franco-Cantabrian cave art known at the present day in western Europe; and there are about a hundred of them—from Poitou through the classic sites of

south France and north Spain to south Italy and Sicily, and it describes them all fully. Special attention is paid to what Breuil calls the six giants—Altamira, Lascaux, Les Trois Frères, Font de Gaume, Les Combarelles, and Niaux; but all the hundred sites are described and illustrated.

In a way it was the discovery of Lascaux that precipitated this book; a photographer of Montignac-sur-Vézère, the small town near where Lascaux is, took superb photographs of the Lascaux paintings. These were published a few years ago in a book in French and in English.* The book showed what could be achieved by direct photography, and by the proper artistic, sensitive presentation of text and illustration. The name of the photographer was Fernand Windels, and it was his photographs and book presentation that interested Breuil in the possibility of a similar book on palaeolithic caves in general. The result is the present book, which is a splendid example of co-operation between expert

archaeologist and expert photographer and book producer, between Breuil and Windels. There are more direct photographs here than have ever before appeared in a book on palaeolithic art—and I mean this both absolutely and proportionately. These photographs meet the criticism of those who say that they are never shown palaeolithic art but only what archaeologists think they see and can trace and copy. These photographs also show how skilful, how inspired, over the last half-century has been Breuil's work of copying and tracing. And they also show, only too well, what is obvious to anyone who has visited palaeolithic caves and studied palaeolithic cave art *in situ*, namely that the camera can record only some of this art; there remain the complicated palimpsests, the lightly etched engravings, the paintings in inaccessible corners, which only



Group at the entrance to La Mouthe during the excursion to the cave of the French Association for the Advancement of Science in 1902. The photograph includes Rivière (third from right), Cartailhac (fourth from left, standing), de Mortillet (standing on his left), and the Abbé Breuil, then aged twenty-five (fourth from right)

Illustrations from *'Four Hundred Centuries of Cave Art'*

the patient labours of the archaeological copyist can record for us.

We do not now dispute the authenticity of upper palaeolithic cave art; although some doubters in France had to be persuaded after the last war that Lascaux was genuine. But then we do not all now believe in the inevitability of progress and the uniform and unilateral development of human culture. It was that which upset the late Victorian archaeologists, imbued as they were by doctrines of organic and social and cultural evolution; upper palaeolithic cave art was too good, too modern, too accomplished to have existed at the end of the quaternary ice age—or that is what they thought. And how disturbing, if true, that this great artistic achievement died out, leaving no tradition of naturalistic drawing and painting behind it. Nowadays these philosophical considerations do not worry us—at least to the extent of blinding our eyes to the evidences of the authentic antiquity of the art. Nor do we spend much time at present discussing the purpose of upper palaeolithic cave art; it is obvious that while some of the work had no utilitarian purpose, many of the paintings and engravings were made or used for magico-religious purposes. What other explanations can there be for the animals drawn with spears or arrows in their sides, or for the footprints of the hunter-artists who danced around the bear at Montespan?

But there is still much to dispute, and in his short introductory essay to this book—and in the book's very title—Breuil raises what are, at least for me, two very controversial issues. It is easy to say glibly, as I have just done, that the main purpose of this figural animal art set

* *The Lascaux Cave Paintings*. Faber. 42s.

in dark remote natural caves, is magico-religious, but in upper palaeolithic times, as in all other times in human history, there must have been artists and a style of figural representation before the art could be used for the obscure purposes of cave ceremonies. And this we know from the evidence of home art and chattel art. We know that artists existed among the upper palaeolithic hunters who fashioned artistic objects of bone and who engraved designs on bone and antler tools and weapons. These men could have learned to draw and paint larger figures on the walls of caves; they could, and obviously did.

But how is it that the style of drawing and painting is so much the same over long distances in western Europe? From Altamira in north Spain to Niaux in the French Pyrenees is about 350 miles: I would not like to walk it in a fortnight. From Niaux to the great Dordogne sites is a good week's walk. North again to Arcy-sur-Cure is another 250 miles. These distances are large enough; but do not forget La Pileta which is right in the south of Spain, in Malaga province, 550 miles south of Santander. Yet over all these great distances, from north France to south Spain and to Sicily, there is an identity of style in upper palaeolithic cave art.

I am not saying the art was all done at one moment or by one person; we know this is not so; we know, especially from the Abbé Breuil's own work, that it is possible to work out an evolution of styles in cave art which correspond to the evolution of style in the home art. But what is the human mechanism that lies behind the identity of general style in this Franco-Cantabrian cave art? How is it that a mammoth from Arcy-sur-Cure in north France is almost identical with one from Les Trois Frères in the south? Did single artists travel about or were there schools of art? Breuil thinks there must have been schools of art: 'This is no longer the work of an individual', he writes 'but a collective, social affair showing a true spiritual unity . . . an orthodoxy, suggesting some sort of institution registering the development of this art by the selection and instruction of those most highly gifted. . . . That there were colleges of art, far from each other, but subject to the same conventions and same fashions, is also certain'. This kind of suggestion has been made before, but never so clearly nor with the authority of Breuil. It is a startling and controversial idea; it makes one think again about this most ancient art of man. The Abbé Breuil has been considering this problem for a lifetime and his words merit our very careful attention.

His second most controversial point is implicit in the title deliberately selected for this book, *Four Hundred Centuries of Cave Art*: 400 centuries; 40,000 years. It is not a catchpenny title, but one deliberately chosen to imply that this cave art lasted for forty millennia. About one aspect of the absolute dating—the dating in years—of upper palaeolithic cave art, there should be little doubt. Many of the animals depicted in the art—mammoth, rhinoceros, lion, reindeer, and bison—have not existed in western Europe since the end of the quaternary ice age, that is to say from a date which geochronologists tell us was about 10,000 years ago. A cycle or two cycles of artistic development can be traced in this art, all going back before 10,000 years ago. But how long before is the question. Breuil suggests it goes back 400 centuries and that the earliest art is to be dated at 50,000 years ago. Some would agree with this date. Others, including myself, would not, and would put the beginning of upper palaeolithic art somewhere about 15,000, or at most 20,000 years ago. I think Carbon 14 dates at Lascaux and elsewhere suggest that Breuil's dating is far too early, but I agree that we need many more Carbon 14 dates before we can be sure of this.

Continuity of Style and Vigour

But it does not really matter very much if Breuil's 400 centuries are reduced to 100 or less. Whatever dating we adopt, to me the real problem remains; and it is this: the long duration of the style. How is it that this style of naturalistic figural art lasted among the small hunting communities of prehistoric Europe for a time far longer than any historical art style has lasted? Lasted all this time, and that, throughout, its conventions remained fresh, vigorous, and immediately attractive to the contemporary eye, whether young or adult. It is as I have turned over the pages of this great work and studied again the excellent photographs and tracings of this cave art, that the wonder, the real wonder, of upper palaeolithic cave art has impressed me with a force greater than before—greater than when I stood recently in the cave at Niaux and looked at the magnificent fresh black paintings, or the many occasions when I have admired the brilliant colours and composition of the animals in the great hall at Lascaux. I am no longer surprised that upper palaeolithic cave art exists at all; or that it is so

marvellous, so good, and so old. I have even got used to the idea that the primitive hunters of the late ice age could produce this vigorous art which is for all time a great expression of the human spirit. But I remain amazed that for so many long centuries of prehistoric Europe, and over so many long miles the poor—the materially poor I mean, they were obviously rich in spirit—the poor upper palaeolithic hunters could have maintained such a uniformity of style and a vigour, such a fresh and energetic art, presumably in the service of their ancient magics. After all it is only 7,000 years since man ceased to be a hunter and food gatherer; all of what most people understand by history has happened in less than 10,000 years—less, in fact, than the time during which upper palaeolithic art flourished, far less if we accept Breuil's absolute dating.

That is what I regard, fifty years after the Montauban Congress and the excursion to La Mouthe, Font de Gaume, and Combarelles, as the real problem of upper palaeolithic art. You may say, if you like, that the problem is one of my own conditioning, of the general conditioning of thought due to the increased tempo of human development during the 7,000 years of recorded history, the way in which material, moral—and, yes, spiritual—discoveries have been made since the first neolithic peasant farmers began tilling their fields and tending their flocks. That may be so. But I do not think that even that explanation detracts from the astonished admiration one must have for these first artists.

—Third Programme

January

The fox drags its wounded belly
Over the snow, the crimson seeds
Of blood burst with a mild explosion,
Soft as excrement, bold as roses.

Over the snow that feels no pity,
Whose white hands can give no healing,
The fox drags its wounded belly.

R. S. THOMAS

At Castelletto

Here by the shore where the young trout, leaping,
Stipple the lake like a shower of rain,
And three boats bleach on a high-dry mooring,
A goat-boy swings from the mainmast rope,
Dark as a clapper in the sunlight soaring
Skyward, and swooping
Down again.

And stroke for stroke (as the child swings
Into the light, where life began)
A church-bell tolls from the mountainside:
Watch, watch the air between
The boy, who flies in the heat of the sun,
And the bell that rings
For a cold man.

Watch, watch the narrowing air
Between the sun and the dark storm,
The killer kite and the glittering fish.
Here is the pact, immune to prayer,
Of the first wish and the last fact,
The brown bright flesh
And the mealy worm.

Ding, dong! The frontiers narrow,
The wind thickens, the grasses bend,
The kite drops like a dark arrow—
Sunlight, fish-light, all are lost
And the boy, who swings from a tall mast,
Is a dead man
At a rope's end.

PAUL DEHN

A Struggle Between Two Religions

By OTTO DIBELIUS, Bishop of Berlin

THE first step towards coming to an agreement with an opponent is to try to understand him. It cannot be my task to discuss the political aspect which rules the Kremlin. I can talk only about the deepest impulses of the Russian-controlled Communists we meet in eastern Germany. Regarding them, I have to say this: in east Germany, as well as in all the other countries under Russian control behind the Iron Curtain, there are two different religions, a Christian and a communistic one.

'The Truth for the Whole World'

One can understand the entire life of the east only if this point is made clear: Communism is not only a political *Weltanschauung*; it is not only a social movement, having the goal of helping the poor in the fight against the rich, the workers against the capitalists; but Communism is a religion. True, it is a secularised religion, but still a religion, which has many striking similarities to Christianity and has created a sort of church, strikingly similar to the Christian Church. Communism is convinced that it preaches the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help it Stalin. It is certain it possesses the only truth that man needs in life and death. This truth was first preached by Karl Marx and his disciples. Then Lenin, and more recently Stalin, have further developed it, till now it stands as the saving truth for the whole world.

This truth consists of the following: Communism has finally discovered the laws of life according to which nature developed, and along with nature the life of human society. Every nation living according to these laws will create its own paradise on earth. This state of paradise can be reached only by the conscious and common work of mankind. Little depends on the individual man. Mankind as a whole and not an individual shall be made happy. When any individual obstructs the way of the total development, one must brush him aside and get on with the work. Those who know the truth—the laws of life—have not only the right but the duty, when necessary, to sacrifice millions of men in order that the great goal may be reached. Furthermore, they are charged with the responsibility of preventing enemies of their development from allying themselves with the west. Prisons and concentration camps abound for these enemies of society. But should these so-called enemies of society be able to work, then they must be exploited as slave labour for the advancement of the general scheme. Thus, their existence—although as slave labour—has a purpose.

Lutheran theologians know that Dr. Martin Luther, the great reformer, often said: 'The right preaching of the Gospel is more important than the conduct of life!' The Communists say exactly the same thing. The most important point is that the truth be correctly and forcefully preached. As a result the people, and particularly the functionaries of the party, have to be constantly schooled. If you should drop into an official building on Wednesday morning, you will find all the rooms empty. Everyone, from the director to the charwoman, is receiving indoctrination for two hours. Every factory has evening classes.

The most important question in applying for a job is whether you have completed the necessary schooling and have proved yourself to be a preacher of the Communist truth. If you are a correct witness to the Communist truth, you can prove to be an inferior workman, yet you will always get a job.

This same principle holds true in the schools. A school behind the Iron Curtain is a communistic church school, if I may be permitted to use this expression. The most important thing is not how much the children learn, but that they learn the Communist truth. To this end they are exposed to political life from the very beginning. Newspapers are read to and with them, Communist papers only, of course. The young are taught to see the events of history and the present world through the glasses of Communist ideology. They are forced to write letters to Stalin, the true father of all children in the world. They are forced to give signatures for the support of the Stockholm and other peace congresses. The teacher of six-year-olds who could not write their names guided their small hands in signing the Stockholm peace declara-

tion. The children must continually write political compositions on such subjects as 'The five-year plan', 'The poor manners of the Americans', 'The re-union of Germany', and so forth. A child may have wonderful grades in all subjects, but if he contradicts the party line either in these compositions or in oral examinations, he can never advance to the next class.

Christians often blame the Communists for educating their children to be liars. In east Germany, at the most, five per cent. of the population are convinced Communists. Ninety-five per cent. of the parents tell their children: what you hear in school is not true at all. As a matter of fact, many teachers do not believe what they have to tell their pupils along political lines. Furthermore, the children also know that the teacher does not believe what he tells them. However, when we throw this up to the Communists, they answer: 'What are you talking about? Who are you to be blaming us? We are not doing anything more than you Christians do in your religious education; you teach the children Bible verses and hymn verses, which because of their immaturity they cannot correctly understand, and then say: "That does no harm, they will grow into the faith and later on will thank their parents and teachers, that they have learned the truth so early". We do exactly the same thing. We teach the children to write down political confessions. It does not make any difference whether they believe these confessions or not. Time marches on. After ten years, perhaps after twenty, we shall have progressed so far that even the most retarded person will recognise that we have been teaching them the truth all along. Then the children will thank us that they have been exposed to this truth so long'.

The Communists, in common with every religion, also have their 'cultus'. The young learn to clap their hands in a certain way; usually outdoors with their hands over their heads, singing Communist songs and waving flags. As it was the custom in past centuries to make a little bow when the name of Christ was mentioned in the church, or to kneel in the Catholic church when during mass the little bell announces the miracle of transubstantiation on the altar, likewise, as soon as the name of Stalin is mentioned, everyone jumps up and gives witness to his devotion with a certain rhythmical clapping.

Communist Education for the Confession

As in the Roman Catholic church, the Communists have their inquisition courts; and in connection with these a systematic education for the confession. Every few years all party functionaries are checked to see whether they have preached the pure doctrine. A special control commission keeps an exact record book for every individual: what he has said in speeches, what he has written for newspapers, what he discusses in his office or in his factory. Furthermore, everyone is expected not to wait until he has been reported for a deviation from the truth, but he must himself confess and admit his sins. The control commission helps, in that it calls attention to single mistakes. However, should anyone deny these mistakes, he then is lost. He loses his whole existence. Individuals in important positions are forced to make their confession publicly in the press or in a mass meeting, although they may be prime ministers or corporation presidents. Even the man in the street must confess every year. Little children are educated along this line. In the kindergarten the four- and five-year-olds have an hour of criticism. At first they simply say what they like or do not like in the kindergarten; and then they have to say what they like or do not like about their teacher. This, then, is suitable material for the confession and self-criticism of the teacher. Then the children have to confess themselves if they have been entertaining false thoughts about the Russian Paradise or Great Britain or America.

This is a picture of the religion of Communism. And where this materialistic religious education reaches its goal, you have a religion for which one lives and dies. Even if in Germany the number of people who are prepared to give up their life for Communism is very small, the number of the fanatical followers of the Communist teaching in Russian-controlled countries as a whole is in the hundreds of thousands, perhaps in the millions. Anyone who understands this must also under-

stand that one cannot overcome such religion with logical arguments, political tactics, or even with force. The Communist religion will not be overcome if it is not by another religion, for which an even greater number of people are ready to live and die.

We have this religion. It is our Christian faith, a faith which is—as we often learn—much stronger than all the other spiritual forces in the world. I cannot describe here how this Christian faith is a living power also in Germany, especially in the eastern parts where the German has to defend himself the second time in one generation against the force of a state which looks to the Christian faith with resolute hostility. Let me only say this: church attendance is growing in eastern

Germany despite the fact that working people often are forced to work on Sundays. Among the young people a greater number than ever take part in the Christian Youth Movement and are attending church services on Sundays. In spite of the poor condition of the people, collections in the churches are steadily rising. We know from previous experience that Christian faith gains strength under conditions as you find them in the Russian zone of Germany; and we are certain that this will be always so. Because the Christian faith is not based on human invention, but it is the echo of the truth of God that has been revealed to us. And this revelation of God's truth will in the end be victorious in the world.—*Third Programme*

Dr. Iremonger and Religious Broadcasting

By the Rev. FRANCIS HOUSE*

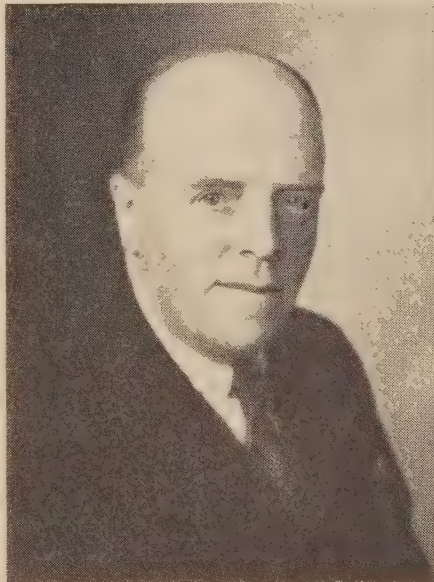
I NEVER really knew Dr. Iremonger personally. I wish I had—but I joined the B.B.C. staff too late. Still, as his successor at one remove I can speak of his great achievements here and of the heritage he left for listeners. Many will probably remember him best in connection with the broadcasts at the time of the death of King George V and the Coronation of George VI; and he did indeed become a very effective broadcaster, though it is amusing to recall that when he joined the staff it was noted that his voice and manner were unsuited to the microphone! When he left the B.B.C. in 1939, he was known and appreciated by millions of listeners; but he left behind something more enduring than the memory of a broadcast voice. He had consolidated the whole structure of religious broadcasting, and his real memorials are the religious programmes advertised in *Radio Times* this and every week.

Those who recall Lord Reith's great concern for religious broadcasting may think it rather strange to claim that Iremonger 'consolidated its structure'. But it is a fact that until he came the religious interests of the Corporation were in the hands of men who, though they were devoted to it, were amateurs at this particular kind of work, and who carried many other responsibilities besides that for religious broadcasting. As the first 'Director of Religion', Iremonger was able to give professional and full-time attention to it. For some time before 1933, Lord Reith had been convinced that the time was ripe for the appointment, but it was not easy to find a man who would have the confidence of the churches and who could also get on well with the staff of the B.B.C. Iremonger was splendidly qualified for the post. He was known for his work at Oxford House, in the 'Life and Liberty' movement, and as editor of *The Guardian*; he was a chaplain to the King; he was a competent theologian, and yet he was anything but a conventional ecclesiastic. His clubs were Arthur's and the M.C.C. rather than the Athenaeum. Above all he was a 'character'. Shortly before he died, he sent to a friend a description of his personality in some words he had read in a life of Alexander Hamilton:

To pretend that he had no joy in battle, no exultation in victory, would be absurd, for his nature was frank and vehement. He was never detached and seldom reticent. . . Throughout his whole life the paramount motive was to get things done. . . His personal charm and exuberant confidence did not follow the normal course, mellowing in middle life into a genial tolerance, a quieter wisdom. . . The change was in a contrary direction. . . His courage never flagged. . . but his heart was filled with a fierce impatience, and he came to despair of the consequences to a world containing so much obstruction and so many fools.

In his letter Iremonger added a footnote: 'Cut out most of the

bouquets and here you have a good deal of me'. No wonder, as Lord Reith put it, 'this red-headed parson went through Broadcasting House like a wind', and earned the respect and friendship of his colleagues—even of those who did not share his faith. He was particularly appreciated as a member of the weekly board which in those blessed days was able to plan and review all the B.B.C.'s programmes. His wit and humour, his astute critical sense, his occasional diplomatic deafnesses, the outspoken way in which he dealt with failure to maintain the highest standards, and his tact in interpreting difficult directives, all helped to give the 'Director of Religion' and his new department the status Lord Reith had intended.



Dr. F. A. Iremonger, the B.B.C.'s first Director of Religion: a photograph taken during his term of office, 1933-39

Iremonger was particularly concerned to make religious broadcasts as effective in their own way as any other forms of broadcasting. He was able to give more attention than had been possible before to the selection of the churches from which services were broadcast, and above all he took infinite trouble in helping speakers to prepare for broadcasts from the studio. I have seen scripts on which he had carefully 'scored' every detail of inflection and timing in red ink; and the special services from Broadcasting House for which he himself was directly responsible were rightly regarded as being of outstanding excellence. Barrington Ward of *The Times* wrote of one of these:

'I thought the Service perfect in every respect . . . [it was] a liturgical event welcome equally for its encouraging novelty and its spontaneity'. He was a great innovator—indeed, he introduced nearly all the varieties of religious programmes, apart from talks and services, which are used in the Home Service today. The first Sunday morning services, the first religious broadcasts for sixth forms (given by Canon Anthony Deane), the first full-scale religious dramas (T. S. Eliot's 'Murder in the Cathedral' and Dorothy Sayers' 'He That Should Come'), Sir Walford Davies' 'Melodies of Christendom', Donald Soper's

'Question Time on Tower Hill', and a variety of broadcasts for children, were some of the new programmes which were first heard in his time. And when the B.B.C. first began to broadcast regularly overseas, he arranged for the religious programmes which were included in it.

In all these ways—by his personality, by the standards he maintained, by his fertility in creating new kinds of programmes, Dr. Iremonger helped to bring religion from the circumference into the full life of the B.B.C., and so fulfilled what had been one of Lord Reith's main purposes from the first conception of broadcasting as a national service. He was also able to give a new kind of stability—or institutional character, to religious broadcasting itself. I can illustrate this in two ways. First, he laid the foundations for the present-day Religious Broadcasting Department. One big step was his appointment of the first Religious Broadcasting Organiser to serve in a region. Today

* Head of Religious Broadcasting, B.B.C.

there are such organisers in all the English Regions and in Scotland and Wales. Their job is to see that the high professional standards on which Dr. Iremonger insisted are maintained in religious broadcasts from every part of the United Kingdom. Secondly, through his work on publications for the use of listeners to the Daily Service, he created a new link with the audience. The Daily Service, of course, had been broadcast for five years before he came—we lately celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary—and some collections of prayers and orders of service had already been published; but the first edition of *New Every Morning* which he edited was something quite new; it included all the forms of service used in the Daily Service during a month, and it clearly met a public demand—nearly a quarter of a million copies were sold.

Next he set to work to meet the difficulty of having so many hymn books, about which listeners constantly complained. Iremonger's solution was to propose a *B.B.C. Hymn Book* which should draw on the best in all the great traditions of hymnody, and which should contain all the hymns required for the Daily Service and other studio broadcasts. Though the war prevented the accomplishment of this design until many years after he had left the staff, he continued to be an extremely active member of the editorial committee, and when the hymn book was finally published, just over a year ago, he made a most enlightening and witty speech about the principles on which it was compiled. The *Broadcast Psalter* was conceived and published after his time at Broadcasting House, but it represented the final stage of his plan to enable listeners to follow the Daily Service word for word.

Another of his schemes for improving religious broadcasts had a vital effect on the character of the Sunday services. In 1937 he wrote a paper for the Central Religious Advisory Committee in which he said that, after listening to broadcast services every Sunday for more than three and a half years, his considered opinion was that two-thirds of them were worthy neither of the churches nor of the B.B.C. Although he thought 'some of the best sermons preached in our time had been delivered before the microphone', far too many gave the impression that 'morality is the whole of religion', or that the preacher was saying 'what he thought the more comfortable of his listeners would like him to say'. He went on: 'Sentiment or lack of courage may also mar the relevance of the prayers: it seems, for instance, a little incongruous to pray frequently for lighthouse-keepers, and seldom for sinners'. He told the committee that the main obstacle to the provision of 'good religious services every

Sunday' was the rigid system of balancing the denominations. The fact that when making out the list of preachers for a quarter he was obliged to fill in the name of the denomination before he even began to think of a suitable preacher, 'militated', he said, 'more than any other one thing, against our being sure of broadcasting a good service'. He therefore asked approval for relaxation of any strict rule of denominational allotments. The committee agreed to what was in fact a return to a very early canon of religious broadcasting: that what was then described as 'preaching ability' should be regarded as more important than strict denominational representation. And this is still our policy today.

What have been the main developments since Dr. Iremonger left the B.B.C.? The most obvious change is in the number and variety of the programmes: one after the other, the Forces Programme, the Overseas and European Services, the Light Programme, the Third Programme, and Television were either created or greatly expanded—and for each of them the demand arose for the inclusion of appropriate kinds of religious broadcasts. This demand has been met by the creation of new programmes, ranging from 'Sunday Half-Hour' to Television Epilogues, and from 'Lift Up Your Hearts!' to Third Programme lectures. On the policy side the most important changes have been the raising of the ban on religious controversy, the modification of the B.B.C.'s pre-war Sunday policy, and the allocation to the heads of all programme departments of the responsibility for the moral content of broadcasts which was once laid upon the 'Director of Religion'. Within religious broadcasting itself, there has been a renewed emphasis on the importance of relating what is broadcast to the on-going religious life of the country—both by making more place in the programmes for the expression of the distinctive teachings and forms of worship of the different Christian traditions, and by seeking much more direct support from church-people in following up the broadcasts. The great examples of this have been the two Scottish Churches' Radio Missions.

But although programmes have multiplied, policies have changed, and emphases are different, I do not think that there has been any fundamental change in the system of Christian broadcasting which Dr. Iremonger consolidated twenty years ago; and his successors in the B.B.C., the churches of this country, and the large number of people of all kinds who listen to religious broadcasts today, certainly owe more than they usually realise to his creative work as 'Director of Religion' in the years 1933-39.—*Home Service*

Missing the Meaning

By M. R. RIDLEY

WORDS are tricky, slippery things; and it is not a bad thing occasionally to try to catch one or two of them by the tails before they elude us altogether. This is specially true in an age that seems to be getting steadily more slowly in the use of words, so that, for example, quite reputable writers and speakers apparently regard 'comprise' and 'compose' as interchangeable. It is worth while now and then pulling ourselves up and asking ourselves whether we have really understood what we have heard or read.

Words are slippery because they will not stay put. Language is a live thing, not a fossil, so that it is all the time changing and growing, so that some words will expand, and have more meanings than they once had, and some may contract and lose part of their meanings. Here is an example, from quite ordinary speech. Two men are discussing a third. Says one, 'Old Jones had a good war record, D.S.O. and bar, and D.F.C.'. 'Well, to be quite accurate', says the other, 'D.S.O. and D.F.C. and bar'. 'That's a nice distinction', says the first. Now then, does he mean 'You're splitting hairs, making a finicky distinction', or does he mean 'That's a pleasant distinction to have earned'? He might today mean either—one can probably tell which from the tone of his voice—but 200 years ago he could only have meant the first, since 'nice' had not then become usable as a rather vague label of more or less lukewarm approval. If you had said to Dr. Johnson that it was a nice day, he simply would not have understood what you meant. And when the

Duke of Wellington—according to one report of his words—used the word 'nicest' of the battle of Waterloo, he was far from meaning that it had been a pleasant experience; he meant that it was a close shave.

I suppose we should all agree that it is a good thing to be able to say what we mean, and a good thing also that other people should know what we mean when we say it. Otherwise the interchange of ideas becomes a desperately fumbling and hit-or-miss sort of affair. And this good thing is surely a thing of really vital importance in a democracy. No doubt a democratic leader can lead after a fashion, or anyway can catch votes, by purely emotional appeals, of which the meaning is negligible. But he is leading a pretty blind lot of followers if neither he nor they really properly understand what he is talking about. And here the wide spread of education has had, along with many benefits, one odd, unexpected, and disastrous effect. Almost everyone today can read print; and most people do read, if it is no more than the Sunday papers. That ought, in theory, to be all to the good—a wider spread of light and thought. But in fact it results also in the spread of a good deal of fog, of ideas only half understood and fuzzy at the edges. For this reason: a number of journalists, and especially the less good ones, seek salvation, and try to impress by using a lot of long words which they do not always very well understand themselves.

The result is that many readers are reading a vocabulary immensely outside the range of their ordinary speech; that would not matter, and indeed might be a good thing; but what does matter, and what is a

thoroughly bad thing, is that they begin to use the long words and the phrases without having more than a vague notion of what the words mean. Hence the sort of confusion I mentioned earlier and a general debasement of the verbal currency. Take the pair I started with, 'comprise' and 'compose'. 'The force was comprised of two battalions and a battery', says someone; or 'The train was comprised of six passenger coaches, four sleepers, and two luggage vans'. But neither force nor train was 'comprised' of those elements. It comprised them or was composed of them. Someone will retort 'What does it matter? Everyone knows what is meant'. Quite true. But you observe what happens the moment that two words of wholly different derivation and meaning are regarded as being more or less interchangeable; you are as it were one word to the bad. Or take another pair, increasingly often confused, 'infer' and 'imply'. In a meeting, Mr. Jones says: 'Mr. Smith's statements are often not in very close relation to the facts'. Mr. Smith gets all hot under the collar and says, 'Mr. Jones' remarks appear to infer that I am a liar'. But a remark cannot 'infer' anything. Mr. Jones may indeed, from a study of Mr. Smith's speeches, have 'inferred'—a logical process—that Mr. Smith was a liar, but his remarks *implied* it, or insinuated it. The result of this now common confusion is that whenever we meet the word 'infer' we have to determine from the general drift of the passage whether it has its proper meaning, or is used improperly in the sense of 'imply'. All of which confuses thought.

Understanding Old Books and Plays

But this sort of confusion of two words is a matter of blurring the meaning, rather than of missing the meaning, which is what I am by way of talking about, and I had better get back on to my main road. I shall come back to contemporary usage before I am through, but for the moment I make no apology for going back some way in time. After all, we many of us sometimes read a book written by a writer who lived in an age earlier than our own; and still more of us perhaps go to see plays written in earlier periods, particularly Shakespeare's. And our enjoyment, whether of book or play, is increased if we understand what is being said. Often we do not, and, with a play, unhappily often the actors do not either. And we and the actors do not understand for a reason inherent in the nature of language.

I said 'words change their meanings'. I am not speaking of words which have lost their meanings, which have, as we say, 'gone out of use'. When Autolycus in 'The Winter's Tale' talks about 'inkles and caddises', the ordinary reader knows that there is no hope for him but the glossary, since 'inkle' means to him nothing, and a vague connection with 'inkling' is, he is suspiciously aware, probably worse than useless; while 'caddises' means to him, if anything, nothing but those grub-like creatures which some of us, as children, used to find under stones in streams; and they seem unlikely inmates of a pedlar's pack. In fact the words mean 'tapes' and 'garters'. Nor am I thinking of words which have, as it were, changed their social status, which were once slang and now are fully respectable, or, less often, have descended the ladder in the opposite direction. For example, a highly respectable Latin grandfather, the *mobile vulgus* (the shifting, unstable crowd), and a quite respectable English father, 'the mobile', had the street-Arab descendant of the 'mob', at first real slangy slang, then climbing a rung or two by being enclosed in apologetic inverted commas, then a rung or two more when the commas can be dropped, but a writer (like Burke in the late eighteenth century) still feels that he has to make a sort of half apology; and finally moving without awkwardness in the highest society.

But what I am chiefly thinking of is those words which are still in quite ordinary current use, but whose meanings to us are different from those they had for writers and readers 100, or 200, or 300 years ago. Those are the words which it is amusing, and may be useful, to examine, because it is those which are the pitfalls for our unwary feet. They look so innocent and obvious, they are so familiar, we know them so well, as we think, and they do often make some sort of sense. So it never occurs to us to stop and consider whether they make the right sense. Shakespeare is full of such traps. Some of them are traps to no one but the hypothetical schoolboy of the howlers. When we hear 'Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?' we do not need even an instant's pause to know that that does not mean that Brutus has run out of shoe-leather. Or when we read that Puck 'bootless makes the breathless housewife churn'—well, I suppose it is not out of the question that the housewife besides being out of breath might be unshod in her dairy, but it does not take more than a fraction of an instant to put us right. But now take one which is of the same class, but just beginning

to move out of it. Capulet, commenting on Romeo, says 'He bears him like a portly gentleman'. Of course we know with our *heads* that Capulet is making no sort of comment on Romeo's figure, but only on his bearing, and means that he carries himself well and moves with the ease of a gentleman. But for us the meaning of 'portly' has become so precise and so limited that I wonder whether we wholly escape a subconscious feeling that Romeo is at least a pretty well-nourished young man.

But to come on to a more illuminating example of what I am getting at. I had known the passage concerned for years before I understood it; and I should hate to think that I was uniquely obtuse, and that all other readers have always understood it. Just before Antony tells Eros to kill him, he imagines his life with Cleopatra in the land of shades:

Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze;
Dido and her Aeneas shall want troops,
And all the haunt be ours.

It needs only the briefest possible reflection, if that, to tell us that 'port' means 'bearing', that 'sprightly' has a stronger meaning, nearer to 'spirited', than ours, and that 'want' means 'lack'. But none of those is the trap. The trap is the word 'haunt'. I am sure that many readers, reading fast, take the half-line to mean that the whole region, Elysium, will be in Antony's and Cleopatra's possession—'And all the haunt be ours'. That is just what, in our modern idiom, it does mean: and it makes sense. But if one looks at it again, it does not make very adequate sense, because it leaves unexplained why Dido and her Aeneas should want troops. And then one sees that 'haunt' means something else, that Dido and Aeneas will miss their usual following because the new pair of great lovers will be the people *run after*; and the passage becomes far more pointed.

Or the simple word 'but'. That surely is plain enough, and innocuous. But a misunderstanding of it can cause confusion. Emilia, discussing the relations of men and women, says to Desdemona, 'They are all but stomachs, and we all but food'. I remember once struggling for some time to suggest, as tactfully as I could, to an experienced actress that she did not quite understand what she was saying, or anyway was not saying it so that anyone else would understand. I do not think she had even a notion of what I was talking about, but thought I was making some silly pedantic point. At any rate she went on giving the line as though it meant that men are almost—'all-but' in our idiom—stomachs, and women almost—little more than—food. 'They are all-but stomachs, and we all-but food'. Whereas Emilia means that all men are *only* stomachs and all women to them *only* food—'They are all *but* stomachs, and we all *but* food'. And here is a phrase from Robert Louis Stevenson: 'And the old shepherd telling his tale under the hawthorn'. If that was Stevenson's own we should be better than excusable in thinking that the shepherd was telling a story. But Stevenson was quoting, and relied on his reader to know not only that he was quoting from Milton, but what Milton had meant, not that every shepherd capped his fellow-shepherds' tales under the hawthorn in the dale, but that he counted his sheep.

The Language of Dr. Johnson

Dr. Johnson is a storehouse of instances. 'Shakespeare approximates the remote and familiarises the wonderful'. 'Approximates'—not 'gets more or less near to'—but actively 'brings near to us'. Or this, which at first sight is really puzzling: 'Little regard is due to that bigotry which sets candour higher than truth'. This setting 'candour' against 'truth' is to us the oddest possible antithesis. But Johnson here, as in several other places, meant by 'candour' something different from what we mean. Both his meaning and ours come straight from the Latin original, but he thought more of the implication of *warmth* in the Latin *candor*, and so meant by his English 'candour' a 'warmth of favourable appreciation', while we think of the implication of 'light', and so use the word as something near a synonym for, certainly not a possible contrast to, truth.

All that all this amounts to is a suggestion that in our reading a wisely suspicious attitude to words, a readiness to challenge any word which causes even a fractional doubt, to make it stand and deliver its meaning, can be an amusing attitude, leading often to better comprehension, and so to fuller enjoyment. But this attitude, once cultivated and established, can be useful in dealing with contemporary speech and writing, and particularly with words and idioms which seem on

(continued on page 102)

NEWS DIARY

January 7-13

Wednesday, January 7

President Truman delivers his last message to Congress on the state of the Union
M. Mayer elected Prime Minister of France by National Assembly
General Sir Brian Robertson starts tour of troubled areas of Kenya

Thursday, January 8

Mr. Churchill flies from New York to Washington and meets President Truman
M. Mayer presents his new coalition cabinet to President Auriol
Marshal Tito and Roman Catholic leaders in Yugoslavia agree to set up a commission on relations between church and state

Friday, January 9

Anglo-Iranian Oil Company wins claim to cargo of oil in tanker 'Rose Mary' at Aden
Rioting in Karachi: curfew imposed in city

Saturday, January 10

Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community meets in Strasbourg
Czechoslovak court sentences one person to death and others to terms of imprisonment ranging from five to twenty-four years on charges of activity against the state
Eleven people reported killed and over 160 injured during riots in Karachi

Sunday, January 11

Sir Ralph Stevenson, British Ambassador in Cairo, requests another meeting with General Neguib on future of the Sudan. Agreement concluded in Khartoum between Major Salem, General Neguib's Special Envoy, and leading Sudanese political parties
East German Government imposes more restrictions on access to west Berlin from Soviet zone
Police raid a market thirty miles north-west of Nairobi and detain 485 Africans for questioning

Monday, January 12

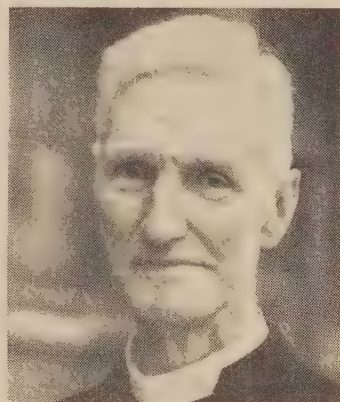
Britain presents draft agreement on the Sudan to Egyptian Government
Dr. James Conant, President of Harvard University, nominated to succeed Mr. Walter Donnelly as U.S. High Commissioner in western Germany
Twenty-four prelates of the Roman Catholic Church proclaimed Cardinals at Consistory at the Vatican

Tuesday, January 13

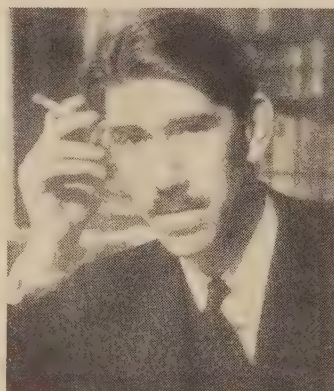
Nine Russian doctors accused of plotting against Soviet military and political leaders
Japanese Government publishes statement about violations of territory by Russian military aircraft flying over Hokkaido
Bill drafted to prohibit the carrying of offensive weapons in public places



French troops searching a swamp in the south of the Tonkin delta, Indo-China, for arms thrown away by Viet-Minh rebels who had tried to disguise themselves as civilians



Dr. Edward Woods, Bishop of Lichfield, who died on January 11, aged seventy-five. He had occupied the See of Lichfield since 1937, having previously been Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge, and later Bishop Suffragan of Croydon. Dr. Woods wrote and spoke vigorously on the place of religion in modern life and had broadcast a number of times



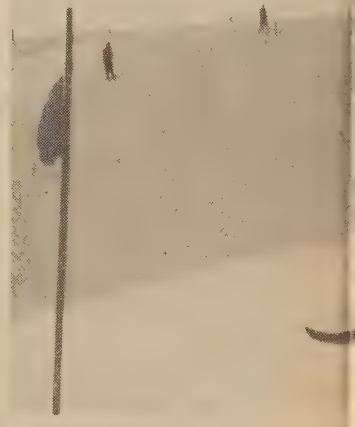
Dr. R. W. Moore, headmaster of Harrow School, who died on January 10, aged forty-six. He had held the post for ten years. He was the author of books on the classics, education, and religion, and had broadcast on many occasions



The hounds moving off after the



Morris dancers from Manley, Cheshire, who took part in the English Folk Dance Festival at the Royal Albert Hall, London, on January 9



The British ski championship was held during the weekend. The downhill event, photographed in action



Churchill with Mr. Bernard Baruch and General Eisenhower, during the President's visit to New York last week. Mr. Churchill left the United States for a holiday in Jamaica on January 9



General Sir Brian Robertson, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East Land Forces, who last week toured the disturbed areas of Kenya, outside the Divisional Headquarters of the Kenya Police at Kiambu. General Robertson said last week-end that martial law was not the answer to Mau Mau terrorism; in cases of scattered lawlessness troops could be of valuable assistance to the police but could not be a substitute for them



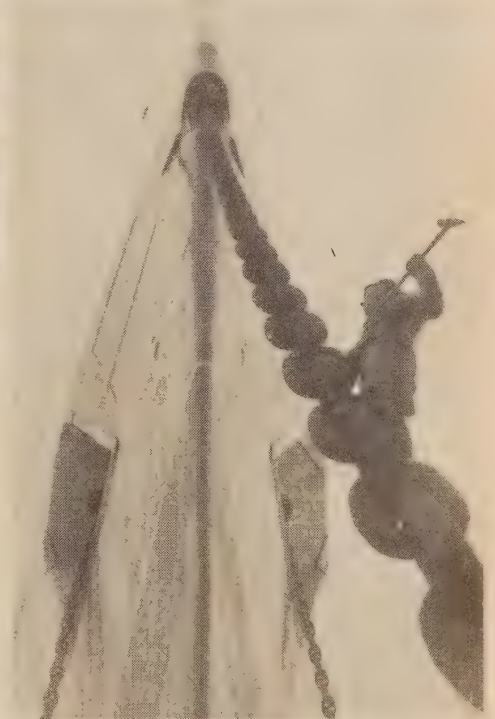
The Tedworth Hunt near Andover, Hampshire, last week



A policeman in Milan surrounded by gifts on Epiphany Day. It is customary on this feast day for the people of the city to present gifts to members of the police force



Moritz last week; N. Harrison, the winner of the first of the twenty-six competitors in the championship, which was held in ideal conditions



A dock worker testing the links of the 'Queen Elizabeth's' anchor chain as she lies in dry dock at Southampton for her annual overhaul

Left: Patrick Ellam of London arriving at New York in his nineteen-foot yacht 'Sopranino' in which he had made an 11,000-mile journey across the Atlantic. He left London in September, 1951, calling at Casablanca, the Canary Isles, Barbados, Cuba, and Miami on his way

(continued from page 99)

their face value to be identical but which are not. A good deal of usually trivial misunderstanding would be avoided if both we and our American friends and acquaintances were readier to realise that the other fellow quite often does not mean what he appears to mean. An American says to me 'Oh, she's a lovely person', alluding to someone whom I think excessively plain. Even if I do not in words question his taste, I am apt to raise a metaphorical eyebrow, till I remember that his epithet has nothing to do with external appearance. He is thinking of qualities of personality, and means something nearer to what I should mean by 'lovable'. And a similar confusion may arise, though the other way round, over the word 'homely'.

There is no time to enlarge on this subject, amusing though it is, but I want to end with one word which causes trouble, and one American usage of which might cause serious misunderstanding. The simple word 'through'. Most people are aware of its telephonic perils. But the one usage which I have in mind appears in the following: during the war this item came in a B.B.C. news bulletin (the exact figure is of no importance, except that it was a high one): 'An American spokesman in Washington has announced that the American production of 'planes through August was 10,000'. Now any English listener, though slightly puzzled by the use of the word 'through', must inevitably

have understood that the American production of aircraft during the month of August had been 10,000. But that was not at all what the American spokesman had meant. He was using a normal American idiom, whereby 'through' means 'up to and including', so that he meant from the time that war production had started, up to the end of August.

But that idiom, universal in America, and very useful, is unknown to us; and one can without much difficulty imagine a context in which the misunderstanding might be quite serious; say a verbal agreement come to in May by which an English commander accedes to a request to keep a force in a particular area at a particular strength 'through August'. He thinks that he has committed himself to maintaining the force at the named strength for a period of one month, and that period three months ahead. The American thinks that he can rely on that strength in that area for the four months from the time that the proposal was made. Both are right, according to their native idiom. Of course no important decision would be so informally made, but the hypothetical case may illustrate the fact that a supposedly common language which is not wholly common may have its dangers as well as its advantages. And, in general, I have been trying to suggest that it is wise to be suspicious, to scrutinise words in order to see what they really do mean.—*Home Service*

Letters to the Editor

The Editor welcomes letters on broadcasting subjects or topics arising out of articles or talks printed in THE LISTENER but reserves the right to shorten letters for reasons of space

Portrait of Mao Tse-tung

Sir,—Mr. O. M. Green said (THE LISTENER, January 8) that Mao 'still enjoins austerity in Peking, has closed the dance halls, discourages private dancing, and has banned the manufacture of *cloisonné* and objects of art in favour of making soap, which he says China particularly needs'. I have just had five years in Peking, leaving last August, and Mr. Green seems to me to be saying anything horrid he can imagine. I should be pleased to show him examples of the new *cloisonné* ware, sponsored by the Government, using modified Han period designs; I do not much like any *cloisonné*, and wish they would encourage regional peasant pottery (for instance) instead, but the new designs are better than the old ones and within the tradition.

As to western dancing, Mao apparently decided in Yenan, which could not help being austere, that it was a good thing; one might more plausibly object that it was being insisted on; I have seen two grinning, elderly male professors get up and dance with each other, or try to, when the student leader at the jollification in the university library, after students had shown other kinds of dancing, said everybody must now dance western style. The dance halls were considered to exploit the taxi-dancers, be more or less brothels, and harbour spies; they were not suppressed from mere dislike of pleasure. Of course, many Chinese are feeling that austerity and effort are needed for a period of crisis, but there is plenty of recognition that you need to keep people cheerful. We will do ourselves no good by making up a false picture of China in the belief that it is somehow good propaganda.—Yours, etc.,

London, N.W.

WILLIAM EMPSON

Germany and the West

Sir,—Dr. Bonn now informs us that what he really meant was that the Germany which was united in 1871 effectively opposed Russia's westward expansion. I submit that this also is not true, since the only conflict which could be quoted as a proof of it was the war* of 1914-18 and this was due entirely to Russian commitments in the Balkans and Germany's

obligations towards Austria. The reference to the treaty of Brest-Litovsk is irrelevant and the least said about it the better, since it was a typical example of Teutonic revenge. In any case, the effects of it did not last long since, at about the same time, Germany and Austria likewise had to disgorge territories which they previously grabbed from Poland, the former the districts of Poznan and Pomerania, the latter, the whole of Galicia with the towns of Krakow and Lwow. It is idle to speculate at present what the final frontiers in that part of Europe would have been like if it had not been that Poland's ardent desire for independence was backed by effective force of arms, sufficient to expel the Germans from the whole of Poland in 1918.

Concerning the present-day Polish western territories, it should be stated that the Yalta Agreement in the chapter headed 'Declaration on Liberated Europe' clearly stated that Poland must receive substantial territorial accessions in the north and west at the expense of Germany. The Potsdam Agreement confirms it and states that the former German territories east of the rivers Oder and Western Neisse shall be under Polish administration until such time as the peace treaty has finally settled Poland's western frontiers. The Agreement, however, clearly empowered Poland to transfer to Germany all German populations or such parts thereof as may remain on these territories. Such resettlement had been accomplished, under Allied supervision, by the year 1947. This right clearly implies that the territories east of the Oder-Neisse line were meant to be permanently given to Poland and not to be regarded as temporarily only under her administration. Mr. Bevin in the House of Commons on August 20 and October 26 defended the wisdom of these treaties. Any interested party can verify that by reference to the appropriate numbers of Hansard. Most of the subsequent statements by various more or less responsible individuals should be taken mainly as representing their own personal views and as such they do not affect the issue.

It should also be noted that, in spite of all the propaganda to the contrary, the number of Germans left on those territories represents less than one half of one per cent.

Concerning the Polish eastern territories, it should be first of all remembered that the so-called Curzon line was proposed by the late Lord Curzon only as a temporary demarcation line while the peace negotiations were in progress. It was never meant to be a permanent frontier of any kind whatever. Some of the Polish territories east of the Curzon line formed part of the Polish Kingdom and, later, the Polish Commonwealth, as early as the tenth century. Others were inherited after the union with Lithuania in the fourteenth century. They were grabbed by Russia, together with other parts of Poland, after the second partition. The south-eastern lands, east of the Curzon line, including the town of Lwow, were never Russian until the Ribbentrop-Molotov Agreement in 1939. Throughout the length of time between the partitions and the resurrection of Poland in 1918 they formed part of the Austrian Empire. After Poland's victory over Russia in 1920 the Russians expected that Poland would demand, and they themselves were willing to concede, a frontier a good deal further east of the 1939 Polish frontier. To prove her magnanimity and to show that she was only too willing to let bygones be bygones, Poland agreed on a frontier which was a good deal further west from the pre-1939 Polish frontier even though it meant leaving the town of Minsk and about 1,000,000 of her nationals in Russian hands. To talk therefore of the Polish territories east of the Curzon line as if she had no right to them is absolute nonsense. These territories are just as much part of Poland as Yorkshire or Devon are part of Britain.

It is quite true that the above falsehoods were being disseminated during the Versailles Peace Conference by those who could not bear to see justice being done. There is no need at present to perpetuate such falsehoods.

The rest of Dr. Bonn's letter represents mainly his own opinions and as such needs no comment except to state that these opinions would be much more convincing if Dr. Bonn paid a little more attention to historical accuracy.

Yours, etc.,

House of Commons, DOUGLAS L. SAVORY
S.W.1

Social Change in West Africa

Sir,—Dr. Kenneth Little's broadcast in the Third Programme as published in *THE LISTENER* of January 1 is the clearest analysis of the West African social situation I have read in the past few years. There is this point which I wish to comment upon. West African development is fundamentally a problem of reconciliation between a 'personal' loyalty and 'impersonal' or abstract loyalty, in other words, reconciling old traditional ways with western ways. The personal loyalty of the old grew up from a religious foundation where all the members of the extended family, or clan, or tribe belonged to one 'God' and so were all children of that 'God' and therefore were 'brothers' and 'sisters'. All persons in such a group learnt very easily to treat one another as 'human beings with human wants and needs'. All others who belonged to other gods and so to another extended family or clan or tribe were outside such consideration.

But as Christianity preaches universal God and the relation of all men who accept the Lord Jesus as Saviour it alone becomes the force which is capable of retaining the personal attitude of treating people as 'human beings with human wants and needs' extended to include all men now that the God worshipped is the Father of all. It means, then, that the reconciliation of the old and the new in the development of West Africa will emerge in a system that embodies the western economic and political institutions expressed in personal relationship in a community characterised by a very strong feeling of mutuality, and so free from the western impersonal and abstract conventions. Whether the African will be capable of this extended loyalty is yet to be seen. If he succeeds, then he has a great contribution to make to man's one great need today—life in a community. The force that can equip him for it is the Christian Church, but the pity of it all is that the Church itself is weakened by divisions and almost paralysed by the faithlessness of its adherents both in Europe and in West Africa.

Yours, etc.,

Lingfield (Rev.) EDMUND ILOGU

Naturalism in the Theatre

Sir,—By concentrating on the proscenium arch as barrier between actor and audience both Charles Davy and Paul Bedford have lost sight of its real significance in dramatic history and in the theatre of today. The proscenium arch cannot be understood in isolation from the development of stage lighting. As long as stage lighting was relatively dim and flat, and the auditorium was illuminated during the performance, the actor had to get physically close to the audience if he was to make a strong impression on it. For this reason theatres had apron stages which answered the same purpose as the Elizabethan platform stage: at all critical moments in the drama the principal actor took care to come right to the front of the stage. The improvement in stage lighting and the darkening of the auditorium in Victorian times made it possible for the actor to maintain rapport with the audience even from the middle of the stage, and this made possible the abolition of the apron stage.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and during the twentieth century the development of directional stage lighting (i.e., spotlights, as distinct from battens, footlights, and floods) has made possible a further development: good producers can now concentrate light where it is mainly needed—on the actors—and at the same time maintain an overall stage picture which emphasises the dramatic situation. Modern stage lighting can be used with equal facility to create the type of naturalistic illusion

which is needed in, e.g., Chekhov plays and to create the symbolic images required in, e.g., the dream plays of Strindberg. When modern stage lighting is used symbolically rather than naturalistically the proscenium arch is usually invisible, and has no existence for the audience. But it is useful to the producer as a mask for spot-bar, perches, and stage-spots: in theory these could be supported in the same positions even if there were no proscenium, but the effect would be rather messy. In my own experience the proscenium is just as useful in non-naturalistic as in naturalistic productions.

I was forced to come to grips with this problem when producing a condensed version of a traditional Kathakali dance-drama in a London theatre. The traditional Kathakali technique of staging represents a combination of the platform stage and artificial lighting. In Kerala (South India), traditional Kathakali performances take place at night on a platform stage without proscenium, by the light of a large oil lamp. At critical moments in the drama the principal dancer-actor gets close to the lamp, so that his facial expressions are clearly visible, and Kathakali connoisseurs take care to sit close to the lamp. When I came to adapt the traditional Kathakali production to a modern western theatre I first attempted to reproduce the effect of the Kathakali lamp, but I found this very unsatisfactory. I found it desirable to use (in an unobtrusive way) the full resources of modern directional stage lighting. Characters were brought on by curtain-bearers, in the traditional way, and the proscenium arch did not interfere at all with the evocation of the supernatural atmosphere characteristic of Kathakali.

I cannot understand Paul Bedford's conviction that the proscenium stage is 'closely bound to the naturalistic play'. In the 'twenties a very large number of plays were written in Germany, Russia, and the United States which broke away as far as possible from naturalism, though intended for production in theatres with proscenium stages. Some expressionist producers preferred to work in arena theatres and other types of unconventional theatre, but Vakhtangov and Tairov—to name only two of the greatest—seemed to find the proscenium arch no obstacle.

The stagnation of the contemporary drama in 'the mud of naturalism' is not due to the existence of prosceniums in our theatres. To my mind the real trouble is that our leading poet-dramatists have little understanding of the resources of modern stage-craft and, above all, of modern lighting technique: T. S. Eliot, in particular, seems to shy away from imaginative staging with puritanical asceticism. Christopher Fry, though a lesser poet, has shown himself more imaginative in this respect: one of the very few occasions when good contemporary dramatic poetry and imaginative staging came together was in the final dream-sequence of *A Sleep of Prisoners*, as produced by Michael Macowan. This was presented in a church, but the producer made skilful use of directional lighting, and the 'fiery furnace' scene would have been just as effective if produced with equal skill in a theatre with a proscenium arch.

There was a time when audiences could be swept off their feet by 'two planks and a passion': nowadays the full resources of modern stagecraft are needed to produce the same effect. The construction of new theatres with more flexible stages would of course help producers, but this is only a small part of a much larger problem. A great deal can be done even in existing theatres.—Yours, etc.,

London, N.W.3

FERNAU HALL

Sir,—The correspondence brought forth by M. St. Denis' talk on 'Naturalism in the Theatre' (*THE LISTENER*, December 4) is important because it points to a major problem

when considering the future of the theatre. Architecture, like all arts, is an expression of the society from which it springs. The drama is basically a religious ceremony in which the dramatist, actor, and audience join in the ritual of revelation.

When the religious festival of Dionysius crystallised into dramatic form, the architecture that evolved to house the ceremony was designed to serve the unities of the dramatic form. The peaks of theatrical achievement occur when the architecture, artists, and audience achieve the greatest unity of expression. The dramatic image exists behind the apparent reality of life. For this reason it is the poet who may find an extension of his poetic image into dramatic form. If he is to find contemporary symbols in which to express himself, he must be unhampered by architectural conventions of another age.

The playhouse must become a plastic structure that will allow the dramatist to develop his own style. His text must control the technique and architecture that brings it into dramatic life.

M. St. Denis, with whom I had the privilege of working on the new proscenium and fore-stage at the Old Vic, understood this problem and all it implies. He knew that the architecture must contain not only the plastic qualities essential to the formation of a contemporary dramatic form, but must also contain the elements that allow a truthful interpretation of the past—in terms of style.

We have, however, chosen to ignore the importance of this experiment in England, and will need to go to France to see the fruits of his work.—Yours, etc.,

London, S.W.10

PETER NEWINGTON

Sir,—The distinction which seems to me important is between the actors and what they represent and create on the stage. This is analogous to (not of course identical with) the distinction between the members of an orchestra and the music they perform. If the musicians are thrust too closely on your attention, you may miss some of the music. I am all for experimenting with all forms of staging, but without dogmatism.—Yours, etc.,

Amberley

CHARLES DAVY

[This correspondence is now closed.—EDITOR, *THE LISTENER*]

The Contemplative Way

Sir,—In submitting the following criticism of the broadcast talk by Dom Columba Cary-Flwe on 'The Contemplative Way' (printed in *THE LISTENER* of January 1) I do not fail to appreciate all the good things contained in it. I suppose it is inevitable that in such broadcasts there should be a due proportion of generalisations. But Dom Cary-Flwe has gone out of his way to exceed that proportion: nearly every one of his generalisations might be challenged, and a good many could, on adequate grounds, be contradicted outright.

As an example of the first, those extraordinarily diverse compilations, the twelve earliest Upanishads, have many themes besides that of the identity of the Absolute with the Self, and one of them, the Svetasvatara, is primarily theistic in tone. Similar remarks may be made about his altogether too facile sketches of Buddhist and Islamic mysticism. But a graver issue is that raised by the guiding theme of the broadcast, which I take to be that the 'contemplative tradition' was strong in the religious life of mankind until the Reformation, was then, for the most part, abandoned, only to be resumed, mainly in the Roman Communion, in recent years.

In reply to this it must be stated, first, that contemplation, the quest for the supreme experience of a meeting with reality, has always

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been characteristic of a small minority of civilised men, and that there is no reason whatever to suppose that such a minority did not exist in the seventeenth or even the eighteenth centuries. Has Dom Cary-Elwes never heard of George Fox or Nicolas Ferrar, or of Jacob Behmen or William Blake or Emanuel Swedenborg? Some of these may have been somewhat unquiet in their contemplations, but that they were genuine mystics and, in their own fashion, had met with God, surely nobody will deny. One cannot help detecting in Dom Cary-Elwes' language a trace of that current nostalgia for the middle ages which is characteristic of so much Catholic thinking since the last century. In every age there have been saints and mystics in all truly religious communities; in every century (and especially in the middle ages) the life of the common man has been 'nasty, brutish, and short'; readers of Coulton and Previt -Orton know that the claims made for the superior fidelity of the men of any decade in the middle ages are just as groundless as claims made for the majority of the nation in any other decade; in fine, it is surely time that this myth was exploded. Divine Grace has the same struggle with unregenerate human nature in every century; no man can say when and how far victorious, or when the end will be.—Yours, etc.,

Selly Oak

(Rev.) H. D. NORTHFIELD

Public Schools and the Future

Sir,—I do know the facts to which Mr. L. E. Haines draws attention, having taught in state schools and having turned to boarding school education precisely because of my enjoyment of the out-of-school activities he mentions. The last paragraph of my letter referred specifically to boarding schools, and it did not occur to me that any implication about day schools or my supposed ignorance of them could be read into it.

What I had in mind is that in many boarding schools the out-of-school responsibilities are as imperative as the class work and a teacher may find himself in contact with his pupils, unable to escape their demands, over an exceedingly long stretch of daily time. Not all of this may be officially expected, but good teachers everywhere give themselves freely and generously, and in a boarding school there is no limit such as that imposed by having a home elsewhere. Further, I am assured, in a private comment on my letter, that in one of the foremost experiments in boarding education run by a county authority, as much as £104 was offered in extra salary for out-of-class duties. This is only reasonable, and it is highly probable that in similar schools the same practice would have to be followed. The more expensive public schools have always paid above Burnham or set the value of residence against supervision duties. The less expensive boarding schools would like to do this, too, but obviously they cannot and their teachers accept the situation for the reasons I gave.

Yours, etc.,

Wennington School, KENNETH C. BARNES
Wetherby Headmaster

The Lost Land of Lyonesse

Sir,—In a letter published in THE LISTENER of January 8, Canon Elliott-Binns rightly corrects the statement made by a previous correspondent about the date of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, but he is perhaps a little too dogmatic when he states that Hermann of Tournai's account of the journey of the Laon canons can be taken as 'definite evidence that Arthur was a legendary hero long before Geoffrey wrote'.

There is very little doubt that it was indeed in 1113 that the worthy canons visited the south

of England, but it must be remembered that Hermann wrote the *Miracula S. Mariae Laudunensis* appreciably later, at a time when Geoffrey's *Historia*, claiming to be the first detailed account of the historical Arthur, was already a best seller. Now, it is notorious that Hermann—and he was no worse in this respect than many of his contemporaries—did not scruple to bring his narrative up to date with details taken from his own personal knowledge of later events. For example, he tells us (II, 6) that the missionaries were received in Canterbury by a certain Archbishop William, who was already well known to them. But this William did not become Archbishop until 1123! Later, in speaking of the arrival of the travellers in Bodmin, Hermann states that they were received by one Algardus 'who was later appointed Bishop of Coutances in Normandy' (II, 15). Algardus did not enter upon this office until 1135, so Hermann must have been writing after that date, perhaps quite a few years later, since he dedicated his work to a Bishop of Laon who is known to have remained in office until 1151.

We must, therefore, admit the possibility that Hermann could have been writing under the influence either of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* itself or of the vogue for things Arthurian to which that remarkable work gave rise. There is very little doubt that Arthur was, indeed, 'a legendary hero long before Geoffrey wrote', for it would be difficult to dismiss all the allusions in early Welsh literature as 'late interpolations' or 'echoes of the *Historia*', but the testimony of Hermann of Tournai must be regarded as suspect.—Yours, etc.,

Cambridge

P. RICKARD

Sir,—I regret the *lapsus calami* in dating the writings of Geoffrey of Monmouth in the thirteenth and not the twelfth century, and thank Canon L. E. Elliott-Binns for pointing out the error.

I am sorry I cannot agree with your correspondent that King Arthur was 'a well-known figure' long before the twelfth century, in spite of the authorities he quotes, two of whom, incidentally, it is now thought doubtful ever lived. Be this as it may, the earliest records we have of King Arthur are so scanty that few scholars place credence in them. Some obscure stories in *Historia Britonum* (c. 680) have reference to a tradition of Nennius to Arthur, who later becomes 'the magnanimous one', a dozen times victorious, etc. Unfortunately for the advocates of 'Arthur, this hero is not a King, but a Leader of men.

The early Bards, mostly Welsh, like the *Saxon Chronicle*, know nothing of Arthur. The first authentic references made of him in Welsh literature occur, significantly enough, in the twelfth century. In the *Stanzas of the Grave* to be found in the *Black Book of Caermarthen* mention is made of the graves for March, Gwythur, Gwgawn, 'but a mystery is the grave of Arthur'. Welsh poetry and prose make little of Arthur; one would imagine, in reading it, there was little in the man to call for note.

William of Malmesbury, contemporary of Geoffrey of Monmouth, writes of Arthur as a man worthy to be remembered. By now the Arthurian legends were well established, not only in Britain, but everywhere on the continent of Europe, each with its variant suited to the genius and traditions of peoples.

One notable feature of these legends which should not be forgotten is a complete absence of the *spirit* of English speaking peoples. In the Duchy of Cornwall an entirely Celtic version of the exploits of the legendary Arthur is found, as un-English as those obtaining on the Continent.

May I say I am in full agreement with all that

Mr. W. N. Ewer has written on the subject of the Lost Land of Lyonesse. We shall never now know how this additional myth came to be associated with the exploits of the legendary Arthur. Not for the first time in our history have terrestrial cataclysms been introduced to our literature.—Yours, etc.,

Helston

G. E. O. KNIGHT

The New Picture of the Universe

Sir,—I feel that the slur on St. Augustine's intelligence contained in Professor C. F. von Weizsäcker's talk printed in THE LISTENER on January 8 should not be allowed to pass without protest. I quote Professor von Weizsäcker: 'When St. Augustine was asked what God had been doing during the eternity before He created the world, the saint answered: "God was making Hells for people who ask unnecessary questions"'. Behind this answer a distinct philosophical idea is hidden.

Perhaps Professor von Weizsäcker can find a philosophical idea hidden behind this answer, but apparently St. Augustine could not. This is what St. Augustine said (Sheed and Ward translation of the *Confessions of St. Augustine*): 'I come now to answer the man who says: "What was God doing before he made Heaven and earth?" I do not give the jesting answer—said to have been given by one who sought to evade the force of the question—"He was getting Hell ready for people who pry too deep". To poke fun at a questioner is not to see the answer. I would much rather say "I don't know" when I do not, than hold up to ridicule one who had asked a profound question, and win applause for a worthless answer'.

St. Augustine then goes on to discuss at length the meaning of time and eternity.

Yours, etc.,

Dublin

B. MORAN

Milton and Bentley

Sir,—Your reviewer (THE LISTENER, January 8) may like to know that Miss Darbishire exposed Bentley's roguery, kindly but firmly, in her James Bryce Memorial lecture, published by the Oxford University Press in 1951.

Yours, etc.,

Oxford

LIONEL GLOVER

Jane Austen

Sir,—The reviewer of Mr. Mudrick's book *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery* (THE LISTENER, January 8) describes Fanny Price's father as 'a retired commander in the merchant navy'. Mr. Price was a Lieutenant of Marines. One of his sons was midshipman, however, on board an Indianan.—Yours, etc.,

Birmingham

ELSIE DUNCAN-JONES

Unfamiliar Bizet

Sir,—In his article on 'Unfamiliar Bizet' (THE LISTENER, January 8) Mr. Winton Dean states that '... in later years his [Bizet's] library contained the full scores of Schubert's operas'. 'Fierabras' was the first of Schubert's operas to be published in full score. The publication was in 1886, eleven years after the death of Bizet.—Yours, etc.,

Marlborough

MAURICE J. E. BROWN

The January number of *History Today* (price 2s. 6d.) contains a detailed account by John Wheeler-Bennett of the attempted assassination of Hitler on July 20, 1944. Other contributions include a critical examination of Napoleon's generalship by C. S. Forester entitled 'Could Napoleon Have Won?'; 'The Emperor Entertains: Napoleon III at Compi gne' by Christopher Sykes; and 'The Fall of Constantinople, 1453' by G. R. Potter.

Old Omnibuses

By SIR COMPTON MACKENZIE

HOW absurd it would have seemed to me as a schoolboy if I had been told that sixty years later I should be looking back to horse-omnibuses with as much romantic regret as, when I was a schoolboy, I used to envy Tom Brown's journey to Rugby by stage coach. At my prep. school, Colet Court, the chief excitement we felt about omnibuses was whether they belonged to the London General Omnibus Company or to the London Road Car Company. The latter flew a little Union Jack on a small pole stuck in a socket in the right-hand corner of the front of the omnibus. Once upon a time the flag had carried the motto 'No Monopoly'; that was in the days when the London General Omnibus Company had tried to keep a new rival company off its routes. Partisanship used to provide (and I am sure it still does) a keen emotion for small boys. Just as we were Oxford or Cambridge, so we were either Road Car or General, and I, being a Road Car supporter, would have walked all the way to Kensington Gardens rather than mount an omnibus belonging to the opposition company.

I might add that the Road Car supporters were allied with the District Railway, and the opposition with the Metropolitan Railway. I can recall now the feeling of hostility with which I used to pass High Street Kensington Station, which belonged to the latter: to me the Inner Circle savoured of Dante's Inferno. What fun it was to ride

Street a blue twopenny ticket; to Piccadilly Circus a pink threepenny ticket. Ultima Thule was attainable with sixpence, but I do not remember where that was for I never travelled to such an unimaginable distance east. We could ride home either in a red Hammersmith bus or on the blue and chocolate bus that took the left-hand fork at Sloane Street down the Brompton Road and finally by a rather roundabout route finished at the Cedars Hotel, West Kensington, for our house was equidistant from either. Beyond the Cedars, at the corner of North End Road, in those days there was a row of country cottages, and all round were houses in large gardens where today is a huddle of gaunt flats. The Grange is still there without most of its garden, but I hear they want to pull it down. Samuel Richardson once lived in this old house, and in my boyhood Burne-Jones lived there. Never mind. Pull it down. It will only be carrying on the persistent tradition of vandalism all over London since the first world war.

There was an exciting omnibus of a shade between ultramarine and prussian blue which arrived from somewhere beyond Redcliffe Gardens by way of Earls Court and went up Church Street, Kensington, to a *terra incognita* beyond Notting Hill Gate. It was an exciting omnibus because, when it reached St. Mary Abbot's, a third horse was attached to enable it to take the slope of Church Street without slackening speed. That third horse, the cock horse, was always ridden by a boy, much, we thought, to be envied.

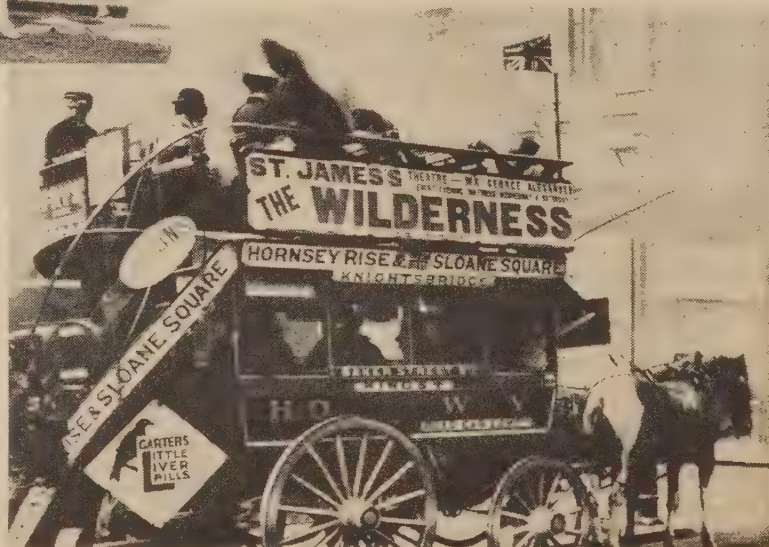
The omnibus along the old Roman road from the west that led through Bayswater to Oxford Street and Holborn was green, a pleasant shade of green that matched the verdure of Hyde Park. There was another green omnibus which started from King's Cross, and reached Piccadilly Circus by way of Bloomsbury and Long Acre. Then it went to Sloane Street, down which it turned, and I believe finished its adventurous and serpentine course somewhere on the other side of Vauxhall Bridge. This green bus bore the name neither of the London General nor the London Road Car Companies, but of Thomas Tilling, and Mr. Thomas Tilling was the grandfather of Mabel Constanduros. In my boyhood I used to think that to own green buses like Mr. Tilling was the pinnacle of life's accomplishment. I felt sure that Mr. Tilling would never have allowed pirate buses on his route. Oh yes, pirate buses were a feature of London life once upon a time. They were particularly active on the route taken by the red Hammersmith buses. I have already said that I was a devoted adherent of the Road Cars, and so, when, after a matinee on Saturday afternoon, I would be waiting



'Knifeboard' horse-bus of the London General Omnibus Company in the eighteen-eighties; and (right) a Road Car Company horse-bus with its Union Jack flying

on the top of a Road Car bus armed with peashooters and shoot up the passengers on the outside of a General while the drivers raced one another along the Hammersmith Road! The very horses themselves seemed to enjoy the sport as their hooves thudded on the wooden pavement of the road. I still have a picture in my mind's eye of those passengers under fire, holding the collars of their greatcoats over their ears, their heads bent low.

The Hammersmith omnibuses were red, a much more honest kind of pillar-box red than that of the motor-buses of today, which pervade London and its suburbs with a monotony of the wrong shade of red. No doubt it is more economical to paint every omnibus the same colour, but the loss to London's colour of once upon a time has been acute in spite of the aniline dyes which have made so many of its windows crudely bright today. From Hammersmith Broadway to St. Mary Abbot's, off Kensington High Street, meant a white penny ticket; to Sloane



By courtesy of the London Transport Executive

with my ancient nurse for a bus at Piccadilly, I would always tug at her arm when she was proposing to get aboard an omnibus without that Union Jack. On one occasion she declared she had no patience with my fads and fancies and she insisted on mounting a bus without a flag. The conductor did not come for the fares until we were past Sloane Street, and then, when my nurse proffered the sixpence for our two threepenny fares, instead of producing the pink tickets, he growled: 'A shilling', 'A shilling?' she gasped. 'Or I set you down right away', he threatened. And she had to pay to avoid the indignity of being turned off the bus.

To find yourself on a pirate bus was faintly alarming, but I remember something even more alarming, and that was in the drenching, dreary November of 1888, when I suddenly read with a thrill of horror on the list of fares at the end of the bus the ominous word 'Whitechapel'. Whitechapel, where Jack the Ripper was murdering people every evening! Suppose that we should be carried on past friendly Piccadilly to Whitechapel! 'Don't keep fidgeting with the straw', I was adjured by my ancient nurse. In cold weather it was the custom to cover the floor of the inside of a bus with straw to produce for the passengers an illusion of comfort.

'This bus goes to Whitechapel, Nannie', I gulped in dread. I was probably told not to behave so old-fashioned, which was Nannie's disapproving epithet for fears like mine, but how glad I was when we got out at Regent Street that afternoon!

There was a wonderful bus that went down Regent Street called the Atlas. The driver sat under an enormous umbrella, which sheltered him and the four passengers who had climbed up to sit beside him on the box seat. The other passengers on top sat back to back on a long knifeboard seat. Alas, by the time I was old enough to climb up and sit beside the driver of an Atlas bus, that unusual vehicle had vanished. From Victoria station I recall an omnibus of deepest mulberry called Monster. This was the Monster public house of Pimlico, a corruption, I believe, of the monastery that once occupied the site. Whitehall and Charing Cross Road were gay with vivid yellow omnibuses, which went on down Tottenham Court Road and one of which finished at the Archway Tavern, Highgate. Chelsea and Putney were both served by white omnibuses. One might fancy that a white omnibus would have looked dingy in that smokier London of fifty years ago. But no, those white omnibuses always looked nearly white.

Once upon a time the various colours of the omnibuses achieved the same kind of significance that a national flag possesses. Suddenly to see a red Hammersmith bus in the far east of London was like a sight of the Red Ensign in an oriental harbour. To us, familiar with the south side of Kensington Gardens, people who lived in Bayswater and

rode in green omnibuses seemed as far away as Ireland, while the white-bused residents of Putney had a kind of polar remoteness. G. K. Chesterton wrote an enchanting fantasy about that balkanised London of sixty years ago. I wish I could have had the pleasure of reading *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* when I was at my prep. school, but G. K. himself had hardly stopped trudging daily to St. Paul's School across the road, and *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* was still ten years from being written.

Of course it was always the aim of every boy to ride outside on an omnibus and if he could find himself in one or other of the front seats and be talked to by the driver his contentment was absolute.

'Now then, old rags and bones, where do you think you're going with that Derby Winner of yours?' That was the kind of question a bus-driver would shout down to an elderly driver of a four-wheeler who was obstructing the road. Sometimes, of course, the driver of an omnibus would get involved with the driver of a hansom and then it was anybody's game, because the hansom could usually give as good as it got.

If one was compelled by nurse or governess to ride inside an omnibus, the objective was the far end of the crimson plush seat where windows on either side of the tariff of fares looked out on the horses, horses as sleek and well-groomed as any in the state-coach of a Duke. If one failed to get that corner, one had to console oneself with the advertisements. There was one advertisement which always fascinated me particularly. It was a transparency in colour stuck upon the glass. A dignified gentleman in a full-bottomed white wig, described as an eminent Q.C., was sitting at table eyeing an elderly bearded gentleman who was asking him what he thought of his Pyretic Saline. To which the eminent Q.C. was replying. 'It is my fixed and deliberate opinion after many years' experience that for keeping the head cool, the mind clear, and the body in health, there is nothing to equal Lamplough's Pyretic Saline!'

There must have been many omnibuses of every colour imaginable that I never saw in my youth, and it is a pity that no record of them exists. We took them for granted, and then they vanished like autumn leaves. I wish the colours of those old omnibuses could be preserved by some topographer of London, but I doubt if that can be done now. A book should have been written about them before the motor-omnibuses drove them from the scene. I had the melancholy pleasure about a year ago of writing a letter to *The Times* to rebuke, more in sorrow than in anger, some high-up official of London Transport who had talked about the white omnibuses that used to go along the Bayswater Road. The Napoleon of Notting Hill would have made short work of that official!

—Home Service

Short Story

Higher Standards

By ANGUS WILSON

'COME along then both', said Mrs. Corfe. It had been the form of her call to tea at half-past six every evening for more than fifteen years. Perhaps it had lost some of its accuracy since Mr. Corfe's stroke some four years before, but home would not have been the same without it; and, if Mrs. Corfe's conception of 'home' was a trifle ill-defined, her determination that it should never be other than 'the same' was the central thread of all her actions and words.

There was nothing to upset her mother's love of sameness in her daughter's slow response to her call. It merely meant that Elsie had come home in one of her moods. There was a time, of course, before the war when Elsie had not had 'moods'. Indeed, there was a sort of tacit agreement between mother and daughter that the blackness of these moods should be indicated by the length of time that Elsie remained in her bedroom after the summons to meals. If, as that evening, Mrs. Corfe had time to hoist her husband from his chair and support him doll-like on his dangling legs to the loaded table, before her daughter appeared at the foot of the stairs, peering myopically with refined distaste at the jelly and the jam puffs, then it was clearly one of Elsie's bad evenings. Not that this particularly distressed Mrs. Corfe, for it allowed her to say brightly:

'Waiting for late folk never made an egg fresher or the tea hotter'.

Elsie's rejoinder to the implied moral rebuke was aesthetic. She carefully removed one by one from the overcrowded table the many half-empty pots of jam and bottles of sauce without which her mother felt the evening meal to be incomplete. Then, going to the mirror, she set the little lemon crepe-de-chine scarf she wore in the evenings into pretty artistic folds; she further asserted her more refined canons of taste by loosening the beech leaves in the vase on the mantelpiece. Such autumn decoration was the sole incursion on the more traditional furnishing of the parlour that her rebellion had ever achieved. Her mother's revenge came each morning when she crammed the branches back into the vase.

Boiled eggs in egg cups shaped like kittens and roosters, were followed by a 'grunter', a traditional local dish to which under the stress of rationing Mrs. Corfe had become increasingly attached. Originally designed as a baked suet roll to contain strips of pork or bacon, it had become a convenient receptacle for all unattractive scraps. Mrs. Corfe, however, retained the humour of the tradition by inserting two burnt currants for the pig's eyes and a sprig of parsley for its tail.

Elsie, like her mother in so many things, shared her love of quaint local customs; but the 'grunter' was a whimsy against which her stomach had long revolted at the end of a tiring day's teaching. She selected three brussels-sprouts and, cutting them very exactly into four

parts each, chewed them very carefully with her front teeth. Mrs. Corfe ate heartily, continually spearing fresh pieces of the 'grunter' with her knife. The noise of her mother's feeding brought to Elsie's pale features a fixed expression of attention to higher things.

Neither her daughter's aura of self-pity nor her own preoccupation with feeding in any way inhibited Mrs. Corfe's continuous flow of talk. After a day of housework and sick nursing, she looked forward to her daughter's return with a greed that was almost physical. To scatter the weariness and frustration of life's daily round in an evening's censorious gossip, to indulge herself in little disapproving jokes about less thrifty, less respectable neighbours seemed the least that so many years of godly living and duty and deadening physical labour might be expected to give to a tired old woman. It was perhaps her only real grudge against Elsie that the girl refused to apply the sharp restorative of a little vinegary talk about her neighbours to her jaded nerves. How soon these black moods would pass from her daughter, she reflected, if only she would allow herself the soothing easement of village scandal or discharge the heavy burdened soul in a righteous jibe or two.

'Carters have refused to serve "The Laurels" again', she said. 'The woman's half distracted. It's nice enough to have grand folk from London coming for the week-end; it's another thing to feed them from an empty larder. Oh!' she drew in her breath with disapproving relish, 'The woman's been on the telephone all day to the other shops. She'll make use of *that* at any rate until it's cut off. But for any effect it's had, she might have saved her breath. On *one* tradesman's black books, on *all*. There might be a pint of milk and a plate of porridge for the city folks if they're lucky', she paused for a second and then added, 'and there might not. But still she's got her fur coat to keep her warm outside, if there's no soup to cheer the inner man'.

Elsie tried hard not to envy Mrs. Hardy her musquash. She pictured as vividly as she could the vulgarity, the terrible, clashing bright colours of the drawing room at 'The Laurels' when she attended the Red Cross committee meeting there. But it was no good, she wanted the fur coat.

Mrs. Corfe tried another tack. If the punishment of the godless brought no comfort, then the distresses of the back-sliding would surely answer.

'It's been a day of wonders at the Fitchett's', she announced with mock solemnity. 'At eight o'clock our Bess had won ten thousand on the Pools. It was *pounds* then, but when the morning post brought nothing, it was down to shillings. All the same the old man quite bit Miss Rennett's head off when she mentioned principles. Nothing against it in The Book, it seems. But when the afternoon post went by, there was quite a change around. Nasty, ungodly things the Pools. Mrs. Fitchett's given our Bess a talking to, so we'll have *her* yellow bonnet back in Chapel next Sunday. Ah! well, it takes more than the Fitchetts and such turnabouts to change the ways of old Nick'.

Elsie remembered the lecture she had given to Standard Four only that morning against gambling. Television and Pools and Space Robots, that was all the children of today thought about. But somewhere at the back of her vision a tall, dark stranger leaned over to loosen her sable wrap for her as she settled herself in the gondola.

'How heavenly St. Mark's looks tonight', she said with exquisite taste, and 'Our St. Mark's', he replied.

Of course, the Pools were a terrible drain on the nation's decency, but . . .

Mrs. Corfe was playing her last card now in the macabre vein. She had almost finished the jelly, and soon it would be time to put Father to bed, so there was not a moment to lose if the evening was to bring any cosy exchange.

'They doubt', she said, 'if old Mary will last the night. The poor old soul's been wandering terribly, and bringing up every scrap she's taken . . .'

But Elsie had endured enough of the sordid aspects of life. She leaned across the table, speaking very distinctly:

'And what did you do today, Father?' she asked.

A twitch of anger shot through Mrs. Corfe's wrinkled cheek. Now that *was* selfish of Elsie, selfish and thoughtless. Her father who had been such a fine man, so hardworking and thrifty, and such a splendid lay preacher, too, for all that he'd had no education. What had he *done* today, indeed? What *could* he do since this wicked thing had struck him? And what indeed could *she* do but keep him neat and clean before their neighbours as he would have wished.

'Well, gel', Mr. Corfe replied, 'I sat up at back window and watched the fowls. It's a wonder the way that crookity-backed one gets her scraps. Why should *she* have had the crooked back, I asked

myself. Oh, the ways of Providence are strange: all they fowls and only one crookity backed, and yet she gets her share. There's a thing to think upon, and to talk upon. . . .'

'Yes, yes, indeed', said Mrs. Corfe, 'but not now'. It shamed her that her husband who had always been so clear in his thoughts, so upstanding, should wander so unsuitably in his words now. Elsie, too, felt the need to protect her father from what his failing body had made him; and so, when her mother began to question her on the events at school that day, she forced herself to answer.

'It's been a Standard IV day for you I know, my girl, by your tired looks', said Mrs. Corfe. And when Elsie began to recount the exploits of that famous undisciplined class, her mother listened avidly. Such sad happenings, such examples of human frailty in the nearby town, were second only to village misdemeanours in her catalogue of pleasures.

'Ah! the Mardykes, I thought they'd be somewhere in it. There's a couple of old Nick's own that'll come to sorry ends', she said with fervour, when Elsie mentioned the notorious bad boys of the form. 'And the woman had sent them out with nothing but a rumble in their stomachs for breakfast, I'll be bound'. It was the fecklessness of city workers that so fascinated Mrs. Corfe. And then as though her bitterness had sated itself, she added, 'You must take them some apples tomorrow, Elsie. They're a couple of comics if ever there were any'.

'Miss Teasdale's away with 'flu', said Elsie, 'so I've got *her* handful to deal with, too'.

'And why can't they get a Supply in?' asked her mother impatiently.

'Supply teachers need notification. Why do you use words you don't understand?' Elsie asked angrily.

It was lucky that noises in the village street came so suddenly to prevent a family quarrel. Shrill whistles could be heard, loud shouting, the sharp swerve of bicycle wheels followed by guffaws of coarse laughter.

'H'm', said Mrs. Corfe, 'Well, there's *our* Standard IV anyway'. It was their favourite name for the youths who nightly rode the length of the village street to call after girls.

Half an hour later when Elsie went to the pillar-box with a letter to an old friend of her Teacher's Training College days, a group of these young men were leaning on the nearby fence. Well! she thought, Bill Daly and Jim Soker among them, they ought to be ashamed wasting their time like that. At their age, too. Why, Jim was a year older than herself, quite twenty-six. She was about to pass by with her usual self-conscious, majestic disregard, when her loneliness was shot through with an aching for those childhood days before awakening prudery and her scholarship to the 'County' had cut her off from the village Standard IV. She paused for a moment at the pillar box and looked back at them. One of the younger boys let out a wolf whistle, but Bill Daly stopped him short.

'Hallo, Elsie', he said in the usual imitation American, 'How about a little walk?'

The retort came easily to Elsie's lips, 'Does teacher know you're out of school, Bill Daly?' she said; but the words came strangely—not in her customary schoolmarm tone, but with a long-buried, common, cheeky giggle. She even smiled and waved, and her walk as she left them was almost tarty in its jauntiness. She was tempted to look back, but another wolf whistle recalled her to her superior taste, her isolated social position in the village.

Mrs. Corfe had her old black outdoor coat on, when Elsie returned.

'Who was that you were talking to?' she asked.

'Oh! Standard IV', Elsie answered, 'Bill Daly was there. He ought to be ashamed fooling about like that at his age'.

'Well, it's lucky there are folks with *higher* standards', said her mother. 'Father's not too good', she added, 'the "grunter's" turned on him. I'm just off down to old Mary's. I've promised to sit with the poor creature. It may help to keep the bogies away'.

Elsie's outing seemed to have softened her mood. She touched her mother's arm. 'You do too much for them all', she said.

'Oh! well', Mrs. Corfe replied gruffly, 'if the poor won't help the poor, I'd like to know who will. I don't like leaving your father though . . .'

Through the flat acceptance of their life implied in her mother's tone came once more the wolf whistles and guffaws, and mingled with them now the high giggle of village girls. Elsie's laugh was hard and hysterical. 'Oh! don't fuss, so, mother', she cried, 'I'll sit up with Father. You haven't got a monopoly of higher standards, you know'.

—From 'New Soundings' (Third Programme)

On Helping the Colonies

(continued from page 87)

prices fall. But the effect at the present time is to keep down the demand for imports. To take one example: the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board's policy of building up financial reserves keeps down the current income of cocoa farmers and so limits their demand for imported goods, even if cocoa exports are soaring. The regulations under which colonial currency is issued also have a restrictive effect on the demand for imports. Currency is issued by a board or commissioner in exchange for sterling, which is then held by the currency authority as backing for the currency it has issued. If extra supplies of a colonial currency are needed for internal circulation, they can be obtained only by paying over to the authority an equivalent amount of pounds sterling. This sterling could otherwise have been spent on imports. The colony's power to buy imports is therefore reduced by the value of sterling handed over to the currency authority. In addition, world shortages of goods and foreign exchange restrictions have also served to keep down the volume of colonial imports. But whatever the reason, instead of the import surplus we should expect to see for a group of territories receiving gifts and loans from outside, there has been this large surplus of exports. The colonies, in truth, have not been getting the help we say we are giving them.

Dollars Earned and Sterling Balances

At this point it is necessary to consider two aspects of colonial economic affairs which have been much discussed recently. First, there is the question of the dollars earned by the colonies; second, there is the problem of the colonial sterling balances. Large quantities of the agricultural and mineral raw materials produced in the colonies are sold to dollar countries. The colonies sell to the dollar area far more than they buy from that area. The result is that they have a large surplus in their dollar trade. Here, also, there are differences from place to place. Again, West Africa and Malaya are the most important territories. They contribute the greater part of the colonies' net dollar earnings, while the West Indies pay more dollars for imports than are earned by their exports. But taking all territories together, in the five years to the end of 1951, the colonies earned a surplus of dollars equivalent to £377,000,000. This amount of dollars did not accrue directly to the colonies themselves, for they are part of the sterling area. The dollars they earned went into the sterling area dollar pool. They went to meet the dollar deficits of the United Kingdom and of other sterling area countries, the colonies receiving sterling credits in return.

It is clear that the colonies' dollar earnings have been all-important to the whole sterling area economy. This in itself is no evidence that the colonies are getting a raw deal. If, instead of spending their dollars in the dollar area, they chose to buy goods from elsewhere, they would have nothing to complain of on this score. Their dollar surplus would then be offset by a deficit in their trade with sterling and other non-dollar countries. As it is, restrictions on dollar imports prevent the colonies spending on dollar goods all the dollars they earn, yet supplies from non-dollar sources are not being imported in sufficient quantity. For it is not only in their dollar trade but also in their trade as a whole that the colonies have exported more than they have been able to import. As a result, dollar import restrictions appear as a particularly burdensome control enforced in the dollar-earning colonies for the benefit of other—generally wealthier—sterling area countries. Only when there is a greater flow of imports into the colonies, from either dollar or other sources, will this dollar question cease to be a bone of contention.

The colonial sterling balances are, in effect, bank deposits and investments held by the colonies in the United Kingdom. The West African Marketing Boards and the authorities which issue colonial currency have large sterling reserves. Colonial governments and banks operating in the colonies also keep money in this country in sterling. Anything which increases these funds will increase the sterling balances of the colonies. Economic conditions during the war caused a great rise in the value of the sterling balances held by the colonies, and by the end of 1946 they amounted to nearly £500,000,000. Since then the total has increased every year and has now reached the very large figure of more than £1,000,000,000. Why have the colonies' sterling balances increased like this since the war? Partly because of the export

surplus I have already described. The colonies have been paid for this surplus with sterling credits. Rather more than one-half of the increase in sterling balances can be accounted for in this way. Apart from the effect of the invisible payments and receipts on current account, the influence of which is probably small, the rest of the post-war rise in the balances must be the result of capital transfers, that is, of loans and gifts from abroad.

What the post-war increase in sterling balances means in relation to external aid for economic development is this. Help from abroad should enable the colonies to spend more on consumption and development than they could do if they had to rely solely on their own resources. This help, in real as distinct from money terms, would take the form of a supply of imports which would not have to be paid for with exports. But the colonies have not been getting enough imports. In reality, they have been spending on consumption and development less in total than even their own resources would have allowed them to do—their export surplus indicates this fact. The colonies have received a certain sum from gifts and loans and from the sale of their exports. Part of this total has been spent on imports. The remainder, which is greater than the total of the gifts and loans they have received, has been added to the balances held by the colonies in sterling. This is a form of involuntary saving which the colonies, in their undoubted poverty, can ill afford. The £1,000,000,000 of the sterling balances is a reproachful comment on development and welfare policy. It means that this country has, in reality, been borrowing from the colonies, not giving or lending to them.

Aid to under-developed countries has been likened to the operation of a welfare state at an international level, in which there is a redistribution of income and capital in favour of the poorer countries. Personally, I do not feel very happy about this analogy. But taking it for what it is worth, I am afraid one must conclude that, in the case of Britain's colonies, this redistribution has not yet started to take place, in spite of many brave words, the voting of funds, the writing of plans, and the creation of institutions. There has, in fact, been redistribution in the opposite direction. Certainly, there have been new hospitals and schools provided in the colonies. Everyone will welcome these things: there is, indeed, great need for them. My point, however, is that the colonies have, in effect, paid for these things themselves. In short, it seems to me that help for the colonies since the war has been an exercise in 'developmentship', or 'how to help without actually giving anything away'.—*Third Programme*

Hagar's Song

The desert begins where the outcast eye
grows locusts along a branch of sky.
Where the grub in the grave is a token of man
the desert of my heart began.

A fealty of love cried the curse of my flight
from the patriarch's well to the fountain of night.
With a burial moon alert above
a fealty of sorrow is my love.

My love wove a child of despair and desire
on the loom of my life with a shuttle of fire.
The fate of the heart is a pattern of air
when the small cry of birth beats the drum of despair.

The desert shall summer the seed of the driven,
to the mesh of the cactus flesh shall be given.
Where the roots of plants pluck the ground to a nest
my seed shall suck at the desert's breast.

The desert begins where the driven eye
sees locusts of fire weaving the sky.
Where the cactus enmeshes the fealty of man
the desert of my heart began.

KAREN LOWENTHAL

Art

The Barber Institute

By DOUGLAS COOPER

AT her death in 1932 Lady Barber left money in trust to provide endowments at Birmingham University for a Professorship of Fine Arts and 'for the erection and equipment . . . of a building to be called "the Institute of Fine Arts"' which should contain an Art Gallery and a Music Room and serve 'for the study and encouragement of art and music'. In other words Lady Barber sought to provide a place where any interested student could find aesthetic stimulation and guidance for himself, within the University precincts, without the obligation to learn. The first Professor (and hence, Director of the Institute) appointed was Professor Bodkin, and the present Catalogue* is 'a detailed and fully illustrated record of all the pictures and drawings purchased by the Trustees' on his advice during the last eighteen years. Some of these are familiar from exhibitions both in London and the provinces, but as a whole the collection is still only known to a few outside the University. For the Institute, which was declared open on July 26, 1939, had to close its doors again immediately, and since its post-war re-opening the general public has only been admitted occasionally.

In the modern world it is no easy task to undertake the formation of an entirely new museum collection—particularly that of a university museum intended to provide a general cultural background for students of many faculties. Judged by the present Catalogue, the Trustees of the Barber Institute cannot be accounted entirely fortunate in their first selections. For though the collection contains several masterpieces and a number of other pictures 'of exceptional and outstanding merit', it lacks that individual character which would give it point in the life not only of the University but of a much wider community. In fact the impression created by the fifty-six pictures and the group of seventy-odd drawings and miniatures here listed is that Professor Bodkin has attempted the impossible task of initiating an exhaustive collection covering the widest range of schools and periods. Works by Italian artists form the most numerous element, and are also the most disparate, ranging from a 'Crucifixion' attributed to Giunta Pisano (c. 1250) to a 'Grand Canal' by Guardi (c. 1780). Next in importance comes a group of paintings and drawings (nineteen in all) by Dutch artists of the seventeenth century, which is unquestionably the most impressive and consistent part of the collection. Then the French School, where the emphasis is on the nineteenth century, except for outstanding works by Poussin and Mathieu le Nain. The English School, too, is largely represented, though with many astonishing gaps and several unimportant examples. The later Flemish School is suggested rather than represented by two fine Rubenses and a Teniers overshadowing an indifferent Brueghel and a Massys. The Spanish School, with an impressive 'Marriage Feast at Cana' by Murillo (the 'Goya' is unacceptable), can hardly be said to exist at all. In addition there are one portrait of the German School (Amberger), one picture by an American artist (Whistler), one Chinese landscape (Yüan dynasty) and four Indian and Persian miniatures.

In the present stage of its development the Barber collection is memorable for a few high-lights—Cima's 'Crucifixion', Constable's 'Glebe Farm', Corot's 'Pêcheur à la ligne', Degas' 'Jockeys avant la course', Gainsborough's 'Harriet Marham', Hals' 'Man Holding a Skull', Mathieu Le Nain's 'Gamesters', Poussin's 'Tancred and Erminia', Rembrandt's 'Old Warrior', Rubens' 'Landscape near Malines', and Steen's 'Wrath of Ahasuerus'. However, the extraordinary, and even frivolous, purchases are more numerous: such for example are fourteen drawings by Phil May, twenty-five drawings for *Punch* by Charles Keene, a 'Self-Portrait' by Frederick Walker, a dreary unfinished portrait by Manet, a thoroughly inept (and over-polished) Pont-Aven landscape by Gauguin, and a putative Tintoretto portrait. But what happens next? The answer to this pressing question could have repercussions on the future of art-historical studies far beyond the University of Birmingham. For it is certain that the perpetuation of the present haphazard arrangement will defeat its own ends, because the collection will merely grow in size without gaining in significance as successive directors add things which happen to interest or appeal to them personally.

It is time therefore to decide on a policy for the future. The Barber is perhaps the richest art foundation in England—the only limitation is that its pictures must have been 'painted not later than the end of the nineteenth century'—and so there are many possibilities open to its new Director, Professor Ellis Waterhouse, a scholar as notable for his powers of imagination and discovery in the field of art as for his wide knowledge and experience. The Barber already has the basis of a remarkable landscape collection—Flemish and Dutch seventeenth, English eighteenth and French nineteenth centuries (there is no work by Claude, Cuyp, Gaspard Poussin, or Elsheimer)—and this element might well be extended in some less familiar

directions. Portraiture is weak, particularly of the English School: Gainsborough and Reynolds stand alone, followed by Orchardson and Frederick Walker. Where are Eworth, Van Dyck, Lely, Kneller, Lawrence and even Watts, whose finest works can be bought for so little money? Or take the French nineteenth century, which again is well represented in embryo. Here the chances of gap-filling are enormous. No English museum can boast an authentic work by David, nor an important work of Delacroix' maturity, nor a great figure composition by Courbet, nor a 'Rouen Cathedral' by Monet. Yet all are of cardinal importance in the development of modern painting. And what of the German School, which is weakly represented in the National Gallery and virtually invisible elsewhere largely owing to Roger Fry's prejudices?

When the next Catalogue appears, with (let us hope) Professor Waterhouse's name upon the title-page, we shall look eagerly for a great change in the character of the collection. Can we hope that the Catalogue itself will also have been improved? For a *de luxe* volume, the information given in the present edition is thin and often incomplete, and there are too many misprints.



'Jockeys avant la course', by Degas

* Professor T. Bodkin and Others. Catalogue of the Paintings and Drawings and Miniatures in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham. Cambridge. £5 10s. 0d.

The Listener's Book Chronicle

The Shores of Light. By Edmund Wilson. W. H. Allen. 25s.

MR. WILSON SUBTILES this book, 'A Literary Chronicle of the Twenties and Thirties', intending it as the direct antecedent to his collection of the 'forties, *Classics and Commercials*. Any-one knowing his work will realise that there is one word omitted, the word American before 'Literary Chronicle'. Mr. Wilson, though his range of subjects is wide, writes always as an American for Americans. His concern is rightly with the progress and the future development of his country's literature. He does not report the contents of books as the run-of-the-mill reviewer; he does not judge, as did the late Sir Desmond MacCarthy, with the detached urbanity of a man whose remote ancestors probably discussed the Homeric collation with the Muses on Parnassus. He is a sort of referee of the literary games played in his time, perfectly acquainted with the rules, but intensely emotionally involved in their fair application at the time of play, and aware that the tactics of the game are continuously changing.

He shows his loneliness by his lamentation that the rival schools indulge in no polemics like those of Europe, that Mencken and Eliot and Van Wyck Brooks pursue their peculiar courses without troubling to criticise one another. At the same time he trounces the humanist prigs of literature, Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More. He believes in the assessment of any single work of an author by his work as a whole, judging firstly whether he has succeeded in doing what he set out to do and only then whether it was worth attempting. Critics with the tolerance, the creative understanding and sympathy, the intelligence and the knowledge which Edmund Wilson possesses are very, very rare. Most of the pieces in this chronicle were book reviews, written fresh after reading a review copy. Yet they stand up remarkably well to the test of the years.

The critic himself grows sensitive to the change of the contemporary situation, as much a part of the chronicle in the altering emphasis of his judgments as are the works which he reviews. He has a trick, a very good one, of examining the surface of a work of art, of suddenly discovering a weakness and breaking through to a level where everything appears wrong and then discovering a new and hitherto undetected virtue. A top-flight critic throughout this period, Wilson was lucky to get the most significant books for review; or perhaps, rather, he showed his judgment in what he chose to notice. He was the first to review Hemingway, the most perceptive reviewer of Scott Fitzgerald. His study of the career of Thornton Wilder shows his nice appreciation of a great talent and its temptations.

It must be emphasised that this is a chronicle and not a history. One looks in vain for Wilson on *The Great Gatsby*, on Caldwell, Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, Steinbeck. The book is over 800 pages in length. Perhaps what he wrote on these he thought unimportant, or perhaps they did not come his way. In the 'thirties he was engaged more on direct political writing, and there is nothing for example about the Federal Theatre Project to offset his twentyish enthusiasm for the work of the Provincetown Players. To an American reader such omissions might not be misleading, but the English reader must beware of misconstruing the balance of the book.

The fine prologue of Wilson's Princeton

professor, Christian Gauss, as a Teacher of Literature sets the tone of the book. This is not the portrait of the author in the mirror of his teacher; but in its emphasis of what Wilson found admirable in this clearly great scholar and teacher it does foreshadow Wilson's own virtues. And the moving epilogue on his friend and early love, Edna St. Vincent Millay, shows him at the fullest of his powers. The limit of these powers is something short of invention. In literature and certain human relationships, his personality seems to glow, his imagination warms up and illuminates other people otherwise rather obscure. It is the critic's function at its highest, to reflect the vision of an author's mind. Several times in the course of this book, there are studies of people, some real and some imaginary. Mr. Wilson in his footnotes tells us which are which. But there is no need. Those that are imaginary are picturesquely dressed and sent forth with a liberal endowment of idiosyncrasy, but wither away and die. They have borrowed their properties from too many people and they have never been given souls of their own. Those sketched from life, such as Hans Stengel the German cartoonist, Houdini as the exposé of spiritualist trickery, or Burton Rascoe, are alive. They exemplify the greatness of Wilson the critic; namely, that he perceives in any work of art, great or small, perfect or imperfect, the man struggling out of the cocoon of his time towards eternity.

The Decline of Imperial Russia. By H. Seton-Watson. Methuen. 32s. 6d.

THE last chapter in the long and chequered history of Russia under the Tsars has a well-defined starting-point: the Crimean War in 1855 or, better perhaps, the emancipation of the serfs six years later. The first of these events showed up the inefficiency and backwardness of the official machine, military and political, and proved that Russia must modernise her equipment or cease to count as a European power. The emancipation of the serfs was the fundamental reform without which the social and economic structure of Russia could not be brought up to date. On the half century that passed before the work of reconstruction was put to its first and fatal test by the war of 1914 many different verdicts might be passed. Admiration may be felt for what was in fact accomplished; it is fashionable nowadays to point out that the solid foundations of the industrialisation of Russia were laid not by the Bolsheviks, but by their despised predecessors. Alternatively, it can be said that the process did not proceed nearly fast or far enough to be effective, being continually obstructed by rulers, officials, and landowners whose autocratic privileges were undermined or threatened by it; the peasants were liberated, but the conditions for a prosperous peasant economy were not created. Or again, the view may be taken that the changes came too fast for the stability of the social order, destroyed the old props and built nothing solid to take their place, so that the structure, eaten away from within, collapsed at the first shock. All these verdicts contain a part of the truth, and are not really incompatible.

This is the fascinating epoch which Professor Seton-Watson has covered in his latest book. He has divided it into three sections—the first, the period of reform under Alexander II, the second, the period of reaction (a misleading word in this context) under Alexander III and

Nicholas II before 1905, the third, the brief respite accorded to autocracy as its 'last chance' between the revolution of 1905 and the outbreak of war, which made the sequel of 1917 inevitable. Within each section there is a not too rigid tripartite division into economics, politics, and foreign policy, which makes the unwieldy mass of material manageable. Professor Seton-Watson has clearly set out to produce something more solid and more abreast of modern requirements than Pares' highly readable but not very profound narrative, and has not been afraid to stuff his pages with facts. He has read widely, and his bibliography and footnotes provide sign-posts for the specialist who is prepared to seek further enlightenment.

This is a text-book for students rather than a work of original historical research, and within these limits can be strongly commended for its comprehensiveness and accuracy. But from the point of view of the general reader the impression is somewhat arid. Professor Seton-Watson has come to the study of Russia from the Balkans and central Europe, and one feels that he has found the change of climate both bewildering and uncongenial. In the main body of the work the only figures who appear at all attractive are the revolutionaries. But the epilogue satisfactorily acquits him of any liking for the Bolsheviks, whom he accuses in one place of having solved 'the overpopulation problem' (what problem?) by the 'starvation of millions'. The fact is that Professor Seton-Watson views all Russian governments with an equal absence of enthusiasm. Unfortunately he is too restrained and too scholarly to denounce—denunciation often makes good reading: he is politely but unmistakably bored. It is as respectable a prejudice as any other. But it is unlikely to fire the student of Russian history.

North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century: The North East, 1700-1750 By Edward Hughes. Oxford. 30s.

FOR a real understanding of eighteenth-century life, it is essential to discover the motives and practices of the great mass of individuals. It is to this task, in a particular locality, that Professor Hughes has applied his considerable powers of research, greatly aided by the discovery of letters, account-books, and papers relating to County Durham and the north-east in the first half of that period. 'The Northern fashion of being perpetually concerned about other folk's business', as a London lawyer then put it, contributes much to the effect of this book: the result is a vivid, if over-crowded, account of the history and social life of this region, which will whet the appetite for the promised volume on west Cumberland in the second half of the century, in which Professor Hughes has long been interested.

The price paid for centuries of Border warfare and insecurity was retarded social development. The book describes the sudden blossoming of a new society based on fortunes made in coal. A double revolution was in progress: the disappearance of the old gentry as a result of seventeenth-century sequestrations and confiscations of royalist estates, and the rise of a new ruling class in their place. This rise of the landed gentry, 'the most notable social phenomenon in the making of modern England', occurred here a century and a half later than in the rest of the country, a belated development with the melting away of political and

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social disorder under the warming influence of economic prosperity. New men, outside the bounds of corporate or ecclesiastical privilege, started from scratch, and came to dominance. On this basic pattern, Professor Hughes embroiders many motifs: social conditions, the coal trade, farming, politics, the professions, merchants, the bishopric, schools and colleges, diversions. (Anne Chaytor took singing lessons to add to her accomplishments: 'it will help to make up the want in her face' frankly commented her mother.) Old and new ideas and practices mingled at all points—manorial customs survived, allegations of monopoly in coal production began to be heard.

Professor Hughes, like the men whose lives he recounts, has his feet on the ground: his sensible comment in every section contributes much to a grasp of eighteenth-century realities. To take one example, politics. He looks not only at why men went into Parliament but what they did when they got there. In politics, influence or interest was all, and the practical expression of it in one's own locality the test. An eighteenth-century M.P., like a modern American representative, had 'to bring home the pork'. The way in which various members dealt with innumerable applications for places are described. George Liddell, member for Berwick, a Government borough, 1727-1740, insisted all recommendations should be by the magistrates. 'Whoever was so recommended I thought it my duty to serve in turn . . . whether they were for me or against me'. Local issues were the staple of national politics—the Wear navigation in 1747 and 1760—and committee work on them loomed large in a member's life. Throughout, a strong sense of responsibility and service, mostly unpaid, to the local community, 'the neighbourhood', was displayed. Professor Hughes also considers the influence of powerful local landed families, and its working, through the 'men of business', the steward or estate agent (visible also in ecclesiastical as well as political affairs), the managing of elections, canvassing, the building up of interest in a borough, the identification of political groups with economic interests, often defeated by the endless ramifications and electoral compromises of eighteenth-century politics. The Whiggism of the north, he insists, had a practical basis, the garnering of the fruits of revolution, most appreciated in regions where they were most immediately threatened—Jacobite or Papist alarms were a constant fear in this 'tail of the Kingdom'.

There are minor slips (how long has Staithes been in the East Riding?), but this is a notable first volume to be published under the auspices of the University of Durham; it is to be hoped similar studies in different regions will follow this excellent pioneering example.

Henri Comte de Saint-Simon: Selected Writings. By F. M. H. Markham.

Blackwell. 12s. 6d.

It is hard to be fair to Saint-Simon. We are so familiar with the eccentricities of his disciples that we lose sight of the good sense of their master. The furious controversies that rent the College of Apostles, the mystical atmosphere of the Salle Taibout in which Père Enfantin delivered interminable sermons to enraptured *illuminati*, the Saint-Simonian tunic that buttoned up the back in order to encourage mutual assistance—all surround the memory of Saint-Simon himself with an aura of faintly preposterous idiosyncrasy. Yet an injustice is done, for Saint-Simon was one of the most original thinkers of nineteenth-century France. Doctrines which could be dismissed as hare-brained by the comfortable bourgeois of the July Monarchy take on a disquieting pertinence in 1953.

Mr. Markham's selection from Saint-Simon's

writings is therefore particularly welcome; he chooses with skill, he translates with competence, and he adds a workmanlike and scholarly introduction. Not that Saint-Simon can ever be read with pleasure. Denied any natural grace of expression, he relegated to his secretaries the task of putting his ideas into presentable form. It was perhaps his only vice as a *grand seigneur*. In all other respects he looked forward to a changed world. He was, as a French critic once remarked, 'incapable of organising anything but the future'. But the future he organised with startling intuition. He conceived the basic outline of the Welfare State; he developed the idea of a society run by technocrats; he gave the vital impulse to the historicism of the nineteenth century; and he dreamed of a federated Europe. But if in many ways he was more realistic and more original than Karl Marx, he failed in one vital respect. Saint-Simon's religion never took root, whereas Karl Marx's developed into a popular cult. As a result, he tends to be regarded, even in France, as a mere precursor of modern socialism. It is true that his centenary in 1925 prompted a resurgence of interest in his work, so that men so divergent as Léon Jouhaux and Marcel Déat both invoked his name; but he was more praised than read. Mr. Markham's book gives us an opportunity to reverse that situation: we are likely to read him more and praise him less. 'The pear is ripe', said Saint-Simon on his death-bed. His judgment was premature. But now that we have been able to take a bite, we shall not be inclined to overrate its flavour.

The Poetry of T. S. Eliot

By D. E. S. Maxwell.

Routledge and Kegan Paul. 21s.

Here are nine chapters to relate Mr. Eliot's verse and drama to his critical prose, and to demonstrate 'the integrity of his development'. On the first page, we read of Mr. Eliot's 'formulating the literary theories from which all his poetry has since derived'. Does poetry, one wonders, 'derive' from 'literary theories'? And has Mr. Maxwell really allowed himself to digest the essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', the importance of which he emphasises? One is doubtful. He has certainly laboured a thesis. A pigeon-hole is to be worked for T. S. Eliot the Classicist, even to the extent of identifying something called 'Eliot's use of tradition' with something else called 'Pope's use of the world of classical mythology'. If anyone naively trusts the procedure of literary historians, let him observe the spectacle of a great living poet and critic placed in the machine. Those who are interested in the subject of this book may prudently read, or re-read, Mr. Eliot's critical prose for themselves.

On the rare occasions when we catch him off the platform or out of the study, Mr. Maxwell is much more lively and exact. What he says of Rupert Brooke's 'A Channel Passage' is sensible and clear—'the reverse of pretty-pretty: ugly-ugly'. It is therefore unfortunate that a very good line of T. S. Eliot's should be thus expounded:

When, towards the end of 'The Waste Land', Eliot says, 'These fragments I have shored against my ruins', he implies, by his allusion to the quotations from the dead authors throughout the poem, that the ruins of traditional ethics and artistic standards that form the modern world's spiritual store are to be rebuilt by synthesising the peculiarities of the modern world with the universality that can be found in tradition.

And his comment on 'Whispers of Immortality' is a pearl of earnest analysis: 'In the first section Webster's perception of death is symbolised by his seeing beneath the flesh to the skeleton, whose bones endure longer than the

flesh that covered them. And around these bones clings thought, more lasting than either, associated with the less ephemeral of the two'. Mr. Maxwell has not entirely renounced a pretentious vacuity, or abstract contortions in praise of the concrete poetic statement.

The best passages of this book concern the 'still point' of *Four Quartets*. Here, for a page or two, Mr. Maxwell ceases to struggle with large generalities, and writes about something which exists. He might also develop his interest in Mr. Eliot's processes of composition, illustrated in the evolution of 'The Ho'low Men' from 'Doris' Dream Songs' in *Chapbook* 1924. He has given us useful annotation, not wholly convincing interpretation, of the 1920 poems; at a time when annotation is becoming, if it has not already become, a minor branch of American industry. But there is too much of a solemn and elaborate game of shadows at the end of which we are left, jaded, where we began. Mr. Maxwell's own responsiveness to poetry is obscured by his determination to sustain an argument. The effect of his method is too often to distort and falsify a poem's form or manner in the attempt to label it.

For a criticism of T. S. Eliot's poetry that is new, we must await a vital new turn in English literature. Meanwhile the poetry remains, and there are three defences against the scholarship that threatens to besiege it. Read Eliot if you will. Read about him if you must. At all costs, never submit to examination or exhibition in the subject.

Carl Nielsen, Symphonist

By Robert Simpson. Dent. 21s.

From the start, this is an attractive book. Nielsen's kindly, boyish face smiles from the frontispiece and one cannot but take to so gentle a man. He is so palpably the true, the honest enthusiast. And then comes the question: an enthusiast about what? One looks again. Gardening, perhaps; the eyes are those of a man who has watched things grow, tended them, pondered over their secrets. But a musician? Well, just possibly a teacher, hardly a creative artist, let alone a master of that recondite art of symphonic writing. One is intrigued and forced to read. That turns out to be a rewarding occupation, for Dr. Simpson conveys his own enthusiasm for Nielsen's music and at the end is a valuable biography, a matter not dealt with in Dr. Simpson's study, by Nielsen's fellow countryman Torben Meyer. It is he who calls Nielsen a renewer, one of the most revealing phrases in the whole book.

Dr. Simpson's task is not only much the larger but by far the more difficult. He has acquitted himself well. Only those who have tried to describe in words the essential quiddity of a work of abstract music such as a symphony will realise how formidable is that task. Even technical analysis is a tetchy business, what with limitations of space, the necessity for counting every quaver in costly music illustrations and the desire to give individuality to the descriptions by casting round for phrases that will convey the right nuance of meaning in words other than those that have been used by a million earlier annotators.

In this book the analyses are clear and with the scores before one they are helpful. More than that cannot be expected; of themselves they make dry reading but no more so than any technical analysis of a work not already heard. And so far we in this country have heard relatively little of Nielsen's music. He is the latest 'find' and already there are signs that he is being taken up by the descendants of those who twenty years ago proclaimed their touching faith in the 'too, too marvellous' Sibelius. It is a good thing that Dr. Simpson

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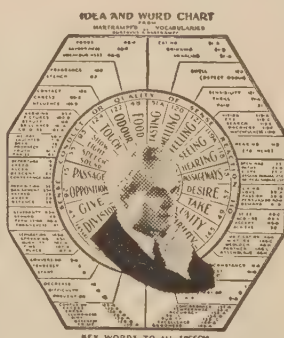
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has got in early with some good sound sense.

His enthusiasm is laudable though it sometimes leads him into excesses. We are told that in the finale of the Third Symphony there is a

'thumping honest tune'. Well and good; though one has the suspicion that the writer is not quite happy about it. But why try to make things better by saying that it 'makes Holst's

"Jupiter" seem cold and mirthless' by comparison? In any case the comparison is musically inept for there is only a remote and superficial likeness between the two melodies.

New Novels

Invisible Man. By Ralph Ellison. Gollancz. 15s.

The Producer. By Richard Brooks. Heinemann. 15s.

The Witch-Diggers. By Jeasamyn West. Heinemann. 15s.

The Courting of Susie Brown. By Erskine Caldwell. Falcon Press. 9s. 6d.

IT is interesting to consider why modern American slang excels in epithets qualifying different shades of dishonesty, falsity, and hypocrisy: corny, phony, folksy, and the rest. None of the four books under review—all good in their way, and Mr. Ellison's a work of near-genius—quite escapes falling into these categories which, to some extent, each illustrates. Mr. Ellison, it is true, is not phony till his last ten pages, but his altogether remarkable courage, imagination, and honesty make one wonder why he should fall down so thumpingly in his epilogue. *The Producer* is a phony study of Hollywood phoniness; as such it belongs to the rather familiar category of writing which is as honest as it dares be while remaining glossy. *The Witch-Diggers* is an attractive, vivacious, rather innocent book, faintly corny throughout, perhaps partly because the scene is laid in Indiana (a farmland area which may explain why corn is called corn) and partly because the action, taking place at the turn of the present century, is treated with all the elaborateness of the 'historic novel', as though ten years before the present reviewer was born were the Ice Age of Hollywood's *Ivanhoe*. Caldwell—as his readers much appreciate—is a master who combines corn, whimsy, and folksiness with toughness.

Let the reader think I am applying these epithets insultingly to these novelists, I hasten to add that, despite the dead weight of hay, cynicism, and whimsy, their books are much more vital and entertaining than this fortnight's English fiction.

Mr. Ellison has, in fact, written the best novel I have read by a Negro writer; a novel which takes the reader far beyond the 'Negro problem' into a consideration of what is tragic about the fecklessness of groups and crowds, whether these are the oppressing or the oppressed, white or black. *Invisible Man* is a kind of Negro *Candide* with something also of Céline's *Voyage au bout de la Nuit*. The first chapter, with its scene of a Southern party where the whites throw coins on to an electrified mattress which gives violent shocks to the Negro boys who are incited to scramble after them—only to discover that the gleaming dollars are false—prepares one for an impassioned outcry against racial discrimination. But really this book is so much more than this that the sense of grievance becomes irrelevant. In the end one is not sure whether Mr. Ellison has grievances of the familiar racial kind at all. He is writing about humanity, and his race is to him only the key which unlocks vast scenes of human experience.

Elements of farce, tragedy, pity, hatred, and love are mixed with a vivid exhilaration for which I really cannot find a parallel. An American critic quoted on the wrapper compares Ellison to 'Kafka or Joyce', and there are certainly pages of writing here which justify the mention of such names. All the same, Ellison's strength lies in his being the opposite of writers who through a limited contemporary experience have created an intellectual picture of modern civilisation. He has had an immense experience of what it is like to be an *object* acted upon by modern conditions, which have had the

result of beating him into a white-hot rage of sensibility and thought. His great achievement is that he is not content to be a 'social realist' learning the lesson of oppression and building up a solid case against social evil. He becomes a humanist who sees the farcical side of the most tragically cruel social situations, who caricatures suffering until it becomes a warmly rich part of the human comedy, and who realises that rebels are as mean and power-seeking and greedy as the people or forces they are rebelling against.

The novel is divided into a kind of prelude which epitomises the Negro in the south, then an account of the Negro college where the hero gets a scholarship, then his adventures in the north, in a paint factory, and as orator in a movement for political brotherhood, and lastly an epilogue summing up the lessons he has learned from his experience. There are wonderful characters, such as the Negro head of the college, Mr. Norton, one of the board of patrons, and Brother Jack, all painted with the same combination of satire and sympathy. Mr. Ellison is as much a born American writer as, say, Thomas Wolfe; and perhaps he has Wolfe's weaknesses of a certain disorderliness and lack of control, and of being too attracted by violence. But the vivid ease with which his large scenes of movement are handled is truly remarkable. But the epilogue in which he declares: 'I sell you no phony forgiveness, I'm a desperate man—but too much of your life will be lost, its meaning lost, unless you approach it as much through love as through hate', has named the fatal epithet which gives this message away. The epilogue gives the impression present nowhere else in the book that some editor who read the manuscript in New York was frightened.

Invisible Man stands head and shoulders above the other three books. *The Producer* is an entertaining, informative, skilful elucidation of why film producers at Hollywood get stomach ulcers. Matthew Gibbons, the hero, is worried about his movie, *The Great Man*. Such idea as it ever had is being slickened out of it by rewriting decided on at conferences, and so on. Matthew gets in a second re-writer called John Shea to re-do the story for him. Shea does his work well and is then driven out of Hollywood by the persecution of an un-American activities man. Matthew discreetly gives money to Shea and also to the committee which is hounding him out of Hollywood. Then there is Matthew's wife, Nathalie, who is unhappy and becomes a Roman Catholic. And there is a man called MacDonald, described as a Jesuit of the movie world, who makes good films about coal mines and the like, without any fuss; but he also is defeated by the forces of commercialism and anti-un-American hysteria.

The whole thing is well and amusingly done, yet Mr. Brooks' careful cynicism about Hollywood is rather sickening. He is dealing here with people whose lives are fantastically unreal. They have no feelings, no personalities, no real motives even. There are two possible approaches to such material: either you might regard it all as tremendous fun (because after all there is something to be said for a thoroughly unreal mode

of existence), or else you could try to blow the whole thing down like a house of straw, with satiric indignation. But Mr. Brooks keeps his plot going with feeble attempts to give all these unreal characters in unreal situations some sort of real motivation. We are to suppose that a kind of diluted moral struggle for the sake of art, human relations, and decent behaviour is going on in the soul of Matthew Gibbons, which is doubtless what Matthew Gibbons thinks himself. Then we are to suppose him trapped in circumstances from which he cannot disentangle himself. And of course there is a kind of superficial truth about all this. But the fact is that people like Gibbons don't care a damn, and what is sympathetic and attractive about them in some ways, repellent and detestable in others, is just this not caring. The phoniness of this photographically presented novel is that Mr. Brooks has exactly the same attitude to his characters as such people would have to themselves. Too observant to pretend that they are respectable, he nevertheless covers their goings on under a glossy varnish of respectability. By trying to make them real he robs their unreality of what is most vital and also most damnable.

"Folks" was Link's way of getting around calling the inmates "inmates" or "paupers". It was sometimes confusing. "Where are the folks?" Dandie would ask Em, meaning Lib, Link, or Cate. "What folks?" Em would answer, happily splitting a hair. "You mean the poor folks or our folks?" "I mean the poor folks who happen to be our folks", Dandie would answer, contemptuous of distinctions.

This quotation, as it were, puts a finger on the quality of *The Witch-Diggers* better than anything I could offer as criticism. The conversation takes place at the turn of the century. And perhaps it contributes to our understanding of what Americans mean by 'corny' to explain that the year 1900 has an air of incredible remoteness in Miss West's pages. To me there is something rather attractive about this elaborate reconstruction of what reads like the age of the mid-West before the Fall, with the buggies, the frounces, the petticoats, the 'Witch-Diggers' who believe themselves able to find the Hidden Word of Satan by digging in the garden, and all the other elaborate quaintness and strangeness. In this prehistoric age, there is a delightful story of a young man torn between two girls. Preoccupied though she is with local colour, Miss West also takes a lively interest in her characters who emerge as strongly individual beneath their historically picturesque garb (see the cover). This book is crowded, vivacious, picturesque, and has much charm.

Mr. Caldwell is a highly professional novelist and story teller. These stories about farmers, commercial travellers, mid-Westerners, Mexicans, toughs of all kinds and descriptions, are club-room tapsters' anecdotes—little more than that—each with a point in it forcibly banged home in the last sledge-hammer sentence. They have a good deal of shrewd observation of a worldly kind, and little sensibility. Few of them would lose much by being retold in different words; but they would be worth the retelling.

STEPHEN SPENDER

CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent contributors

TELEVISION

Slippery Start

PERHAPS BECAUSE I have not always been looking as attentively as I should, I have never until last Sunday actually seen William Shakespeare on skates. But all marvels come in time to our hearths. There was the bard, bald as a coot, bearded as in the Chandos portrait, and looking a trifle like Miss Sonja Henie from the knees down, addressing some lines from King John to Queen Elizabeth I, who had just previously made a splendid entrance with all the dignity of the goalkeeper of the Montreal Eagles acknowledging the plaudits of the fans. Skating in a farthingale has its hazards, but this was so decorously dignified that one was sorry when the figure got to the steps of the throne and with the help, I think, of Lord Burleigh, clip-clopped up the steps, a Swan upon Land. Meanwhile the gentleman we must not call the Swan of Avon declaimed, and anon Sir Walter Raleigh appeared. Was he to spread his cloak for the queen to skate over? Apparently not. Next we were being harangued by a lady who looked like Brünnhilde's skating niece, who gave us a dizzy *résumé* of English history, punctuated by the hissing entry of skating highlanders, skating red-coats, skating Old Bills from the first war and skating Waafs from the second, the Comet (on skids), the Crown (on wires) and 'Land of Hope and Glory' (on key). A tremendous finale which deserved the attentions of a Meyerbeer.

Obviously this is what people *really* like and the sooner we get some of our tottering orchestras on to the ice the better, to say nothing of the national theatre project. Just how and why so much real history came into the story of 'The Sleeping Beauty' I forget, but there was a linking passage with some delicious clowns called Chocolate and Company who poured water into the trombones of their colleagues, and other cultural

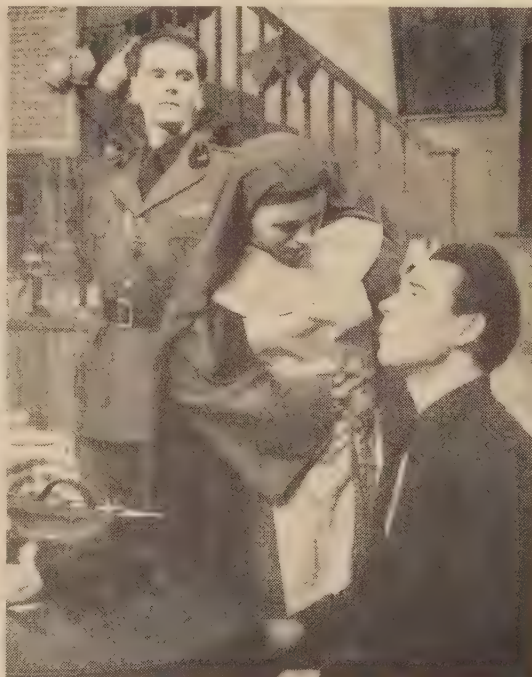
démarches of the kind. I am sure the Wembley Pool will be glazed for many a week and I am delighted to have seen it without having had to go there and sit around that chill arena.

But so much ice has left little room for some of the more earnest aspects of the drama. It was Goethe who said—with one of those blinding glimpses of the obvious which always seem to his fellow countrymen so profound—that *Anfang ist schwer*, which applies no less to the

start of an article on television than to the start of the year's programmes. Let us judge gently.

N. C. Hunter, author of 'Waters of the Moon', did not quite come up to expectation with a play, 'The Affair at Assino', set in television's own spiritual home, a sort of bogus Italy full of charm, ice-cream accents, nuns with 'shy, merry eyes', donkeys, wise old priests, and sets which will do, at a pinch, for the next 'Cavalleria Rusticana'. The production was a little leisurely but certainly a good deal of charm came safely through. Robert Eddison, vastly becoming as a fascist vassal with a flowing tassel, Daphne Slater (Sister someone-or-other), Hector Ross, and James Dale, among others, did very nicely indeed: acting, in short, better than play. 'Count Your Blessings', produced with aplomb by Tatiana Lieven, was a slight thing, but both here and earlier on the stage it has proved able to get a good deal of fun out of the Funny Lodgers situation which has played so important a role in our theatrical heritage. Peggy Simpson and Patrick Barr were the newly-weds—or impecunious couple. At this distance I cannot recall whether they are actually newly wed or not, but that is generally the rule in this kind of play: if broke, then madly in love. Viola Lyel was very much the thing as a painfully over-refined gentlewoman.

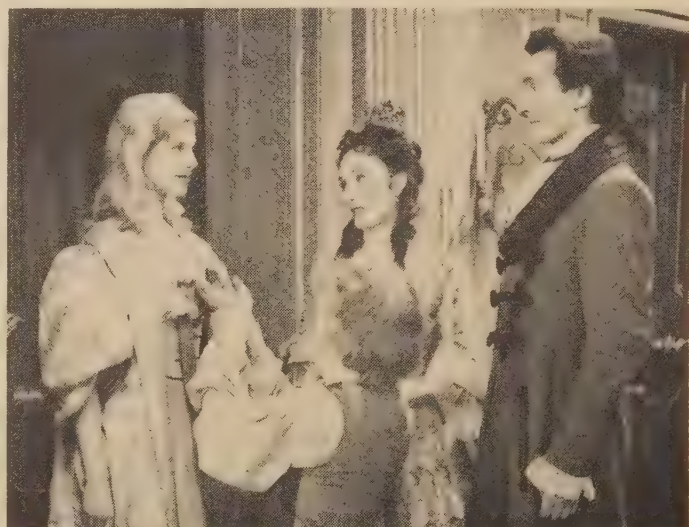
'Johnnie Was a Hero', by Kenneth Hyde, was specially written for television; which takes me back to Goethe once more. Could not a more stimulating start have been devised than that long, dull scene (which opens almost all West-End plays) of maid and mistress bottling fruit? One groaned with impatience, hardly mitigated by funny entries for fat copper and wheezing gaffer and peeps at the sun setting over cardboard fenlands. But if one stuck it out, one was rewarded. It got very much better. I did not quite come round to Mr. Hyde's implied point about the ironies of our evaluation of killings in war and killings in peace,



'The Affair at Assino', with (left to right) Robert Eddison as Tibaldi, Daphne Slater as Sister Teresa, and Hector Ross as Sacchi



Scene from 'Johnnie Was a Hero' on January 4, with (left to right) Duncan Lamont as Ernie, Bryan Forbes as Bill Miller, and Sheila Burrell as Mavis, an ex-Waaf



'The Princess and the Pea', in Children's Television on January 4: Ann Summers as the goose-girl, later Princess Rosalind, Charles Hodgson as Boots, Catherine Lacey as the Queen, and Peter Rendall as Prince Cophetua

but I could well see that a man who strangled his wife but was terribly kind to dogs was going to be something of a real hero in many of the homes where the play penetrated. Duncan Lamont played the killer well. As the ex-Waaf who could tell a thing or two, Sheila Burrell excellently caught the type; and as the gentleman farmer's children, Marjorie Stewart and Bryan Forbes, the ex-pilot who remembered the war with half-realised affection, were interesting enough. As the policeman with the Peterborough accent (was it?), Richard Pearson plays a role which must be becoming second nature to him. It was no surprise to learn next morning that he had so naturalistically blown his police whistle that nervous neighbours all over the country had been dialling 999. This is naturalism indeed, and those who have been arguing in the correspondence columns for and against the use of the proscenium arch may like to ponder its implications.

PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE

BROADCAST DRAMA

Ici on Parle Français

OUR MORE INSULAR playgoers, who doubt any piece that, as one of O'Casey's characters says, is 'thickly speckled with th' lure o' foreign enthrallment', have had Jean Anouilh heavily on their minds. The man, they hold, is a menace, intolerably prolific; his plays and philosophies of life and love have an unhealthy marsh-light flicker. With grave simplicity, addicts reply that Anouilh is the most important practising dramatist. Better, perhaps, to suggest that he is an adroit and mannered Frenchman who is often in danger of parodying himself. In his latest work, 'The Waltz of the Toreadors' (Third), we have something from the same corner of the shelf as 'Ardèle': indeed we meet again, from that bitter almond of a play, the old General who is tied to a crazy wife, and the wife, Amélie, of whom someone observes now that she had quite an amorous disposition before relapsing into bigotry and fruit-bottling. 'Ardèle' began with the General (who has rogued and ranged in his time) kissing the chambermaid. 'The Waltz' ends with the General and another maid about to walk around the garden: the pattern is complete.

As in 'Ardèle', we feel that this is an unpredictable nightmare-world. At one moment the General appears to be a stock figure of farce, crying 'Thundering cannon-balls!' or 'Suffering catfish!' At the next he is remembering the romantic night when he waltzed with his love Ghislaine at the Saumer ball. And then, in a passage that must thrust this among the Plays Unpleasant, we have a horrible scene in which the taunting, screeching wife forces the old man, for whom she has just declared her hate, to go with her through a few mocking skeleton-dance waltz-steps. (We remembered, 'The dead are dancing with the dead, the dust is whirling with the dust'.) The General and Amélie are bound together for life in their empty union: he has never had the courage to break away, for (so he says) he cannot hurt anyone, though he tortures himself. The part is the king-post of a piece that is an extraordinary structure. Now the author 'runs on' tediously and rancidly; now he develops a strong theatrical force. The turmoil of a contrived end, in which the General's secretary proves to be his illegitimate son, reminded me of the sixteen-year-old shipwreck recalled at the close of 'L'Avare'.

Norman Shelley, acting the General magnificently, kept us in tune with the self-conscious, lonely old man who has clung to a boy's heart, and who is both absurd and monstrously pathetic. Rachel Gurney (Ghislaine), Gladys Spencer in Amélie's frenzy, and Austin Trevor

as the right doctor for the General, added to a play that, translated by Lucienne Hill and produced by Raymond Raikes, was at least a collector's event—though, when all was over, one looked instinctively for something to take away the taste.

After Anouilh, even Somerset Maugham, neo-Restoration dramatist, seems like a master of sweetness and light. 'The Constant Wife' is one of his lesser plays, a useful set of wit with some prosing passages. It came efficiently to the air, as to the stage; and the cast, led by Margaret Lockwood, dealt with it (Light) with equal efficiency. That is the term, also, for 'Bonaventure' (Home), Charlotte Hastings' tale of the kind of event that rarely happens more than three, or at the most four, times a year in a Norfolk convent. There was some monotonous speaking here; but Mabel Terry Lewis brought a beautiful authority to the Mother Superior.

'A Private Eye for Pennsylvania' (Home) was a feature on a theme that (so I believe) M. Anouilh has not yet investigated: the workings of a secret society that terrorised an American anthracite coalfield in the eighteen-seventies. 'There's a Pinkerton in the Mollies', somebody cried during the evening (it is a nice enigmatic phrase): I remained an excited listener until a prince of private detectives had 'hanged fourteen Mollies and gaoled the rest'. 'England's Darling' (Home), spoken with eloquence by Marius Goring and others, returned us romantically to Clemence Dane's portrait of Alfred (and the cakes), and to the high ardours of Wessex. Again, not an Anouilh subject.

J. C. TREWIN

THE SPOKEN WORD

The Poetry of Mathematics

'I HATE AND I LOVE. You ask me, perhaps, how I can do so? I don't know, but I feel the torment of it'. So, in a graceless, spur-of-the-moment translation, runs an exquisite epigram by Catullus, and such are my sentiments towards mathematics. Small wonder, then, that I was enthralled by a Third Programme discourse on 'The Spirit of Applied Mathematics', a broadcast version by C. A. Coulson, F.R.S., of his inaugural lecture as Rouse Ball Professor of Mathematics in Oxford. I have often been roused to admiration by what seemed a captivating neatness in certain mathematical processes and I have even heard mathematicians employ the word 'elegant' in this connection, but Professor Coulson went much further than this; indeed if I had landed into the middle of his talk without knowing the title, I might almost have supposed that what he was discussing was the art of poetry. Applied mathematics, he claimed, is an act of artistic creation, an attempt to lay bare the hidden structure of things, an activity subject to the canons of beauty and fitness, and he spoke of the joy of creation and, enquiring how the creative impulse works, he replied that it seems to come from some sort of contemplation of Nature. All of which, you observe, might be said of the work of the poet. It was a talk of extraordinary interest delivered with an energy and style which made it doubly stimulating.

'Elegant' is the word also for Mary Scrutton's occasional book reviews, and for good measure I will throw in 'brilliant'. Good talking does not always make good reading: in cold print, lacking the rhythms, intonations, and audible personality of the speaker, some excellent broadcasts are disappointing; but with her this is not so. She expresses herself in a free, trenchant, and witty style which is at the same time excellent prose. Her review, entitled 'Haunted Hellas', of E. R. Dodds' *The Greeks and the Irrational* had the shapeliness of an essay and, besides, gave me a thirst for the book

which I hope soon to quench by reading it.

I had never heard of the Maldives Islands—such is my ignorance and, I suspect, that of the majority of my gentle readers—until personally conducted thither last week by Special Correspondent Richard Williams, who in 'Coral Island Republic' graphically described their appearance and the kind of life that is lived there. On the first day of this year the islands became a republic under British protection and Mr. Williams was present at the inaugural ceremony. The inhabitants are Moslems and their language is based on Arabic, Hindustani, and Singhalese. They support themselves chiefly by fishing, selling the fish to Ceylon. Other activities are shipbuilding (a craft bequeathed them by the Portuguese), weaving mats, and picking up the charming shells that sprinkle their shores. The life sounds tempting. Rather too much fish, perhaps; and I am not very partial to coconut, but the total absence of wheeled traffic with the exception of three motor-cars is a recommendation. On the other hand there is no smoking or drinking, and that makes you think. For myself, I could easily resign tobacco and spirits, but it would be sad to forgo the heart-warming, civilising, and health-giving pleasure of wine. Dogs are not allowed, and that would protect one from dog-lovers. These brief talks on distant lands usually maintain a high standard, as did this one. A whiff of the tropics at this time of year warms at least the imagination.

'Parents and Children' on the Light is a new series in which a small party of parents discuss with a 'child expert' the problems and difficulties with which their children face them. It is evidently intended for parents for whom psychology is no more than a rather awkward word. For such it should provide some interesting and helpful listening.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

BROADCAST MUSIC

'The Rake's Progress'

THREE CONSECUTIVE HEARINGS are a severe test of any work, especially of an opera deprived of its stage setting. From this ordeal Stravinsky's 'The Rake's Progress' came out almost unscathed. For one thing it is founded upon an admirably constructed libretto, even though adherence to Hogarth's pictorial tale has resulted in a dramatically inconsequent final scene. For Tom Rake-well's end in Bedlam seems poetically unjust after his successful gamble for his soul, however much it may be morally justified. The poet has generally well understood the proper business of a librettist, which is to provide as simple a text as possible without verbal conceits or complex notions, a strong framework, that is, for the music. He does once or twice transgress this rule. Nick Shadow's philosophising: 'Because the giddy multitude are driven by the unpredictable Must of their pleasures, and the sober few are bound by the inflexible Ought of their duty, between these slaveries there is nothing to choose' looks well enough on paper, but may baffle an audience in the opera-house.

Then the opera was greatly helped by Dennis Arundell's skilful handling of it as a production for radio. His insertions into the text, even the narrator's occasional intrusions upon the music, were tactful and helpful to the listener, though sometimes, I thought, unnecessary. The focusing of the voices was generally good, as heard from the loudspeaker, though Baba's voice coming from the sedan-chair seemed in the same plane as Anne's and Tom's. The china-smashing, too, did not sound to me like large vases being crashed to the ground in a rage, but that may be because I knew they were only cups and saucers dropped by the effects-man.

But, as in all opera, the music is the thing.

It seems to me quite amazing that Stravinsky should have so often been able to reflect the inflections of the English language. When he repeats a phrase, he often alters the placing of the accents, but, odd as they sometimes look on paper, when sung the phrases come out exactly as one might speak them with altered emphasis in the repetitions.

Stravinsky's melodies are often extremely beautiful—for instance, the trumpet obbligato, most feelingly played by Mr. Walton, which introduces Anne's arioso in Act II, Tom's cavatina in the brothel, and Anne's lullaby in Bedlam—and have an unexpected warmth of feeling.

They vary, too, with the characters. Baba, a superb comic creation with her airs of the great artist, and Sellem, the auctioneer, have each distinctive music. Only in the chorus at Mother Goose's did I feel a lack of full-blooded gusto, and the madmen in Bedlam are inadequately characterised. Again, Auden's rather feeble satire on eighteenth-century speculators (the bread-machine) evoked correspondingly feeble music. On the other hand, the churchyard scene is magnificently dramatic and Nick Shadow a sinister addition to the race of operatic devils. We might have been spared the naming of the cards he picked in the manner of 'Twenty Questions'.

With one obvious exception, the singers were excellent, particularly Gwen Catley, a charming Anne though small of voice, Anna Pollak, who enjoyed herself as Baba, and, above all, Alexander Young. I make no excuse for devoting all my space to these performances, which were brilliantly conducted by Paul Sacher, even at the cost of passing over Egon Wellesz's cantata, Malcolm Macdonald's interesting talk on eighteenth-century trumpet-style, and a magnificent performance of the Pathetic Symphony under Paul Kletzki, who made the hackneyed old weeper sound fresh and genuinely tragic.

DYNELEY HUSSEY

The World of Hans Pfitzner

By DONALD MITCHELL

Pfitzner's 'Palestrina' will be broadcast at 7.0 p.m. on Monday, January 19, and 6.0 p.m. on Friday, January 23; his Sextet at 10.55 p.m. on Thursday, January 22; and a programme of his songs at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 21 (all Third)

HANS PFITZNER (1869-1949) lived in our time but was never of it. Musically he rejected it out of hand, and he spent any amount of energy in rejecting it not only in his compositions but in vigorous battles with the leading critics, composers, and theoreticians of his day. He bitterly opposed Busoni, engaged in polemics with Berg and Paul Bekker, and later in his life became involved in head-on collision with the music-psychologist Julius Bahle over the very explosive question of musical inspiration.

The Bahle controversy developed in 1936 but, for Pfitzner, the whole subject had been a central obsession since his early years. The trouble was that his decisive opinions were markedly out of step with those of his contemporaries. Pfitzner believed in God-inspired inspiration—a mystery, in fact—whereas the world about him was becoming impatient of mysteries and instead of waiting for a spiritual compulsion preferred conscientious application to the job on hand. Pfitzner believed in the high supremacy and responsibilities of German art in an environment where idealistic nationalism of this order was at a discount. He believed in the essential isolation of the creative artist ('How strange and unknown are men to each other!'). Palestrina sings in Act I, 'The bottom of the world is loneliness' in a period when many artists were busy beginning to fulfil their obligations to society.

All Pfitzner's furious denouncing would have been no more than a spectacular example of odd-man-outmanship, had his maladjustment not resulted in the composition of some strikingly individual music and one indisputable masterpiece: 'Palestrina'. And while Pfitzner's powerful moral convictions regarding the business and purpose of composing may appear at first sight to be riotously old-fashioned they have—as recently as 1952—been very similarly re-stated in Hindemith's book *A Composer's World*. It is significant that if any modern opera has been influenced by 'Palestrina' it is, without doubt, 'Mathis der Maler'.

'Palestrina', for which Pfitzner wrote his own distinguished libretto, was first performed in 1917. Strauss had already been on the pathologically-inclined offensive with 'Salome' (1905) and 'Elektra' (1909); Bartók's grisly 'Bluebeard's Castle' (1918) and Berg's topical 'Wozzeck' (1925) were just round the corner. How typical of Pfitzner to choose a theme so obtrusively untropical: a vast 'musical legend' about the sixteenth-century composer! His self-identification with the vicissitudes of his title-figure is obvious as soon as one examines the opera's story, particularly the epical Act I.

Palestrina, lonely and dejected after the death of his wife, is commanded to provide a Mass which will both satisfy the requirements of the ecclesiastical authorities and divert 'modern' (i.e. figurate) music from its present pursuit of wrong ends into worthier channels. Palestrina, on declining to undertake the commission, is visited by the shades of nine eminent predecessors who remind him of his duty; heavenly angels next intervene and with their assistance Palestrina, almost in a trance, sets down his Mass.

Act II, the Council of Trent, follows. Here all is confusion. The prelates quarrel over trivial matters of precedence, and the problem of Palestrina and his Mass hardly receives a hearing. Strongly contrasted to Act I in every musical and dramatic respect, Act II represents the noisy outside world in which the artist and his works can have no part. At the end of the Act the dignitaries' arguments infect their servants and a struggle ensues which momentarily resembles the brawling apprentices in Act II of 'Die Meistersinger'. But Pfitzner's Act ends on a tragic note. Soldiers open fire on the contestants and the curtain falls on a scene of comparative carnage. In Act III, Palestrina's Mass has been approved by the authorities and the Pope himself brings his thanks and blessing to the aged composer. A joyful crowd in the streets hails Palestrina as music's saviour while he quietly improvises at his organ, deaf to everything but his music.

This brief synopsis shows how closely the opera's action corresponds to Pfitzner's innermost beliefs. What clearer exposition could there be of his attitude to 'musical inspiration' than the tableau in Act I where Palestrina's Mass is dedicated to him by the angels? Whether divinely inspired composing is a truth or an illusion is irrelevant; Pfitzner's conviction that it was a truth gave rise to a vision of great sublimity, and the vision is translated into music with unerring technical assurance. The radiance of the first (high soprano) angel's entry with a phrase from the 'Missa Papae Marcelli' is wonderfully prepared by the exclusive concentration on the dark timbre of male voices which precedes it. Pfitzner hardly saved 'modern' music as did the hero of his legend. But what Pfitzner did do—unlike any other post-Wagnerian opera composer—was to make a post-Wagnerian idiom serve the severest, most ascetic principles. He desensualised, so to speak, the Wagnerian manner, and it is the exceptional spiritual purity of 'Palestrina' which lends the work its quite special 'tone' and its special place in musical history—more so than either its genuine extensions of the Wagnerian idiom or its

many substantial glimpses of the modal and (despite Pfitzner!) even neo-classical future. Hence the prime importance of Pfitzner's personality. His single-handed revolt against a revolution was justified in 'Palestrina's' uniqueness.

Pfitzner's songs number over one hundred and stand, in the words of Hans Rutz, as 'lyrical bridges between the stage and instrumental works'. Schumann was Pfitzner's idol and model as a *Lieder*-writer (but the late, rather than the youthful Schumann), and his earlier songs were directly in the tradition Schumann bequeathed. In themselves they disclose no very individual features although one notices refreshingly spare accompaniments (e.g., Op. 4, No. 1/1888-9), shapely forms (e.g., Op. 26, No. 1/1916) and off-key opening detours (e.g., Op. 4, No. 4). The later 'Alte Weisen' (Op. 33/1923) reveal less generally recognised aspects of Pfitzner's character—a rough, folksy humour and, most unusually in this most sober composer, a brief indulgence in coloratura. The best of Pfitzner's songs are not so much *Lieder* as progenies of the operas. A beautiful example is the deeply contemplative, improvisatory and very slow 'Abbitte' (Op. 29, No. 1/1922) where—as so often in Pfitzner's meditative songs—one is in touch again with the spirit that inhabits 'Palestrina'.

The instrumental music comprises many chamber works, among them three string quartets, a Piano Trio, a Piano Quintet, and the Sextet (Op. 55/1945) for piano, violin, viola, cello, double-bass and clarinet. One of Pfitzner's very last works, this Sextet was not one of his happiest conceptions; indeed, it cannot make the same claims on our attention as the much previous Piano Quintet (Op. 23/1908). The instrumental combination originates dire problems of texture, most of which Pfitzner lucidly solves by adopting a kind of *concertante* style with ample activity for the piano alone or in conjunction with one or several of its colleagues from the ensemble; *tutti* is rare.

As a consequence of these inevitable solo digressions the work is formally on the loose side and its five movements (*Allegro, Quasi minueto, Rondello, Semplice, misterioso* leading to *Comodo*) indicate the Sextet's suite-like (and thus relaxed) nature. The informality of structure reflects itself additionally in the Sextet's predominant mood which is, on the whole, gayish. Pfitzner, however, was not fundamentally at home in the realms of the *divertimento*, and his thematic invention—other deficiencies apart—was not always up to his convivial, or just tranquil, spirits; for once, and without irony, one can justly complain that Pfitzner failed to take himself seriously enough.

ADDRESS.....

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